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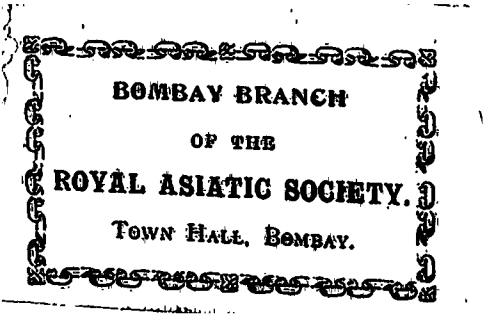

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ON

THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY

C. F. KEIL, D.D., AND F. DELITZSCH, D.D.,
PROFESSORS OF THEOLOGY.

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VOL. II.

By CARL FRIEDRICH KEIL, D.D.

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NAHUM.

INTRODUCTION.

1. PERSON OF THE PROPHET.—All that we know of *Nahum* (*Nachūm, i.e.* consolation or comforter, *consolator*, Gr. *Naoúμ*) is, that he sprang from the place called *Elkosh;* since the epithet *hâ'elqōshī*, in the heading to his book, is not a patronymic, but the place of his birth. *Elkosh* is not to be sought for in Assyria, however, viz. in the Christian village of *Alkush*, which is situated on the eastern side of the Tigris, to the north-west of Khorsabad, two days' journey from Mosul, where the tomb of the prophet Nahum is shown in the form of a simple plaster box of modern style, and which is held in great reverence, as a holy place, by the Christians and Mohammedans of that neighbourhood (see Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains*, i. 233), as Michaelis, Eichhorn, Ewald, and others suppose. For this village, with its pretended tomb of the prophet, has not the smallest trace of antiquity about it, and is mentioned for the first time by a monk of the sixteenth century, in a letter to *Assemani* (*Biblioth. or.* i. 525, iii. 1, p. 352). Now, as a tomb of the prophet Jonah is also shown in the neighbourhood of Nineveh, the assumption is a very natural one, that the name *Elkush* did not come from the village into the book, but passed from the book to the village (Hitzig). The statement of Jerome is older, and much more credible,—namely, that "Elkosh was situated in Galilee, since there is to the present day a village in Galilee called Helcesæi (others Helcesei, Elcesi), a very small one indeed, and containing in its ruins hardly any traces of ancient buildings, but one which is well known to the Jews, and was also pointed out to me by my guide,"—inasmuch as he does not simply base his statement upon the word of his guide, but describes the place as well known to the Jews. This Jewish tradition of the

birth of Nahum in the Galilæan *Elkosh*, or *Ἐλκεσέ*, is also supported by Cyril of Alex., Ps. Epiphanius, and Ps. Dorotheus, although the more precise accounts of the situation of the place are confused and erroneous in the two last named. We have indeed no further evidence that Nahum sprang out of Galilee. The name of the Elkesaites furnishes just as little proof of the existence of a place called Elkosh, as the name Capernaum, *i.e.* village of Nahum, of the fact that our prophet lived there. Whether the sect of the Elkesaites really derived their name from a founder named Elxai or Elkesai, is just as questionable as the connection between this Elxai and the place called Elkosh; and the conjecture that Capernaum received its name from our prophet is altogether visionary. But Jerome's statement is quite sufficient, since it is confirmed by the contents of Nahum's prophecy. Ewald indeed imagines that he can see very clearly, from the general colouring of the little book, that Nahum did not live in Palestine, but in Assyria, and must have seen with his own eyes the danger which threatened Nineveh, from an invasion by powerful foes, as being one of the descendants of the Israelites who had formerly been transported to Assyria. "It moves," he says, "for example, round about Nineveh only, and that with a fulness such as we do not find in any other prophecy relating to a foreign nation; and it is quite in a casual manner that it glances at Judah in ch. i. 13–ii. 3. There is not a single trace of its having been written by Nahum in Judah; on the contrary, it follows most decidedly, from the form given to the words in ch. ii. 1 (ch. i. 15), as compared with Isa. lii. 7, that he was prophesying at a great distance from Jerusalem and Judah." But why should not an earlier prophet, who lived in the kingdom of Israel or that of Judah, have been able to utter a special prophecy concerning Nineveh, in consequence of a special commission from God? Moreover, it is not merely in a casual manner that Nahum glances at Judah; on the contrary, his whole prophecy is meant for Judah; and his glance at Judah, notwithstanding its brevity, assumes, as Umbreit has correctly observed, a very important and central position. And the assertion, that there is not a single trace in the whole prophecy of Nahum's having been in Judah, has been contested with good reason by Maurer, Hitzig, and others, who appeal to ch. i. 4 and i. 13–ii. 3, where

such traces are to be found. On the other hand, if the book had been written by a prophet living in exile, there would surely be some allusions to the situation and circumstances of the exiles; whereas we look in vain for any such allusions in Nahum. Again, the acquaintance with Assyrian affairs, to which Ewald still further appeals, is no greater than that which might have been possessed by any prophet, or even by any inhabitant of Judah in the time of Hezekiah, after the repeated invasions of Israel and Judah by the Assyrians. "The liveliness of the description runs through the whole book. Chap. i. 2–14 is not less lively than ch. ii.; and yet no one would infer from the former that Nahum must have seen with his own eyes all that he sets before our eyes in so magnificent a picture in ch. i. 2 sqq." (Nägelsbach; Herzog's *Cycl.*) It is no more a fact that "ch. ii. 6 contains such special acquaintance with the locality of Nineveh, as could only be derived from actual inspection," than that "ch. ii. 7 contains the name of the Assyrian queen (Huzzab)." Moreover, of the words that are peculiar to our prophet, *taphsar* (ch. iii. 17) is the only one that is even probably Assyrian; and this is a military term, which the Judæans in Palestine may have heard from Assyrians living there. The rest of the supposed Aramæisms, such as the suffixes in נִבּוֹרֶיהָ (ch. ii. 4) and מַלְאָכֶיהָ (ch. ii. 14), and the words נָהַג, to sigh = הָנָה (ch. ii. 8), דָּהַר (ch. iii. 2), and פְּלָדוֹת (ch. ii. 4), may be accounted for from the Galilæan origin of the prophet. Consequently there is no tenable ground whatever for the assumption that Nahum lived in exile, and uttered his prophecy in the neighbourhood of Nineveh. There is much greater reason for inferring, from the many points of coincidence between Nahum and Isaiah (see pp. 6, 7), that he was born in Galilee during the Assyrian invasions, and that he emigrated to Judæa, where he lived and prophesied. Nothing whatever is known of the circumstances of his life. The notices in Ps. Epiphan. concerning his miracles and his death (see O. Strauss, *Nahumi de Nino vaticin. expl.* p. xii. sq.) can lay no claim to truth. Even the period of his life is so much a matter of dispute, that some suppose him to have prophesied under Jehu and Jehoahaz, whilst others believe that he did not prophesy till the time of Zedekiah; at the same time it is possible to decide this with tolerable certainty from the contents of the book.

2. THE BOOK OF NAHUM contains one extended prophecy concerning Nineveh, in which the ruin of that city and of the Assyrian world-power is predicted in three strophes, answering to the division into chapters; viz. in ch. i. the divine purpose to inflict judgment upon this oppressor of Israel; in ch. ii. the joyful news of the conquest, plundering, and destruction of Nineveh; and in ch. iii. its guilt and its inevitable ruin. These are all depicted with pictorial liveliness and perspicuity. Now, although this prophecy neither closes with a Messianic prospect, nor enters more minutely into the circumstances of the Israelitish kingdom of God in general, it is rounded off within itself, and stands in such close relation to Judah, that it may be called a prophecy of consolation for that kingdom. The fall of the mighty capital of the Assyrian empire, that representative of the godless and God-opposing power of the world, which sought to destroy the Israelitish kingdom of God, was not only closely connected with the continuance and development of the kingdom of God in Judah, but the connection is very obvious in Nahum's prophecy. Even in the introduction (ch. i. 2 sqq.) the destruction of Nineveh is announced as a judgment, which Jehovah, the zealous God and avenger of evil, executes, and in which He proves Himself a refuge to those who trust in Him (ch. i. 7). But "those who trust in Him" are not godly Gentiles here; they are rather the citizens of His kingdom, viz. the Judæans, upon whom Asshur had laid the yoke of bondage, which Jehovah would break (ch. i. 13), so that Judah could keep feasts and pay its vows to Him (ch. i. 15). On the destruction of Nineveh the Lord returns to the eminence of Israel, which the Assyrians have overthrown (ch. ii. 2). Consequently Nineveh is to fall, and an end is to be put to the rule and tyranny of Asshur, that the glory of Israel may be restored.

The unity and integrity of the prophecy are not open to any well-founded objection. It is true that Eichhorn, Ewald, and De Wette, have questioned the genuineness of the first part of the heading (the *Massâ'* of Nineveh), but without sufficient reason, as even Hitzig observes. For there is nothing that can possibly astonish us in the fact that the object of the prophecy is mentioned first, and then the author. Moreover, the words נינוה משׂא cannot possibly have been added at a later

period, because the whole of the first half of the prophecy would be unintelligible without them; since Nineveh is not mentioned by name till ch. ii. 8, and yet the suffix attached to מְקוֹמָהּ in ch. i. 8 refers to Nineveh, and requires the introduction of the name of that city in the heading. There is just as little force in the arguments with which Hitzig seeks to prove that the allusion to the conquest of No-Amon in ch. iii. 8–10 is a later addition. For the assertion that, if an Assyrian army had penetrated to Upper Egypt and taken that city, Nahum, when addressing Nineveh, could not have related to the Assyrians what had emanated from themselves, without at least intimating this, would obviously be well founded only on the supposition that the words "Art thou better than No-Amon," etc., could be taken quite prosaically as news told to the city of Nineveh, and loses all its force, when we see that this address is simply a practical turn, with which Nahum describes the fate of No-Amon not to the Ninevites, but to the Judæans, as a practical proof that even the mightiest and most strongly fortified city could be conquered and fall, when God had decreed its ruin. From the lively description of this occurrence, we may also explain the change from the third person to the second in ch. iii. 9*b*, at which Hitzig *still* takes offence. His other arguments are so subjective and unimportant, that they require no special refutation.

With regard to the date of the composition of our prophecy, it is evident from the contents that it was not written before, but after, the defeat of Sennacherib in front of Jerusalem in the reign of Hezekiah, since that event is not only clearly assumed, but no doubt furnished the occasion for the prophecy. Asshur had overrun Judah (ch. i. 15), and had severely afflicted it (ch. i. 9, 12), yea plundered and almost destroyed it (ch. ii. 2). Now, even if neither the words in ch. i. 11, "There is one come out of thee, who imagined evil against Jehovah," etc., nor those of ch. i. 12*b*, according to the correct interpretation, contain any special allusion to Sennacherib and his defeat, and if it is still less likely that ch. i. 14 contains an allusion to his death or murder (Isa. xxxvii. 38), yet the affliction (*tsârâh*) which Assyria had brought upon Judah (ch. i. 9), and the invasion of Judah mentioned in ch. i. 15 and ii. 2, can only refer to Sennacherib's expedition, since he was the only one

of all the kings of Assyria who so severely oppressed Judah as to bring it to the very verge of ruin. Moreover, ch. ii. 13, "The voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard," is peculiarly applicable to the messengers whom Sennacherib sent to Hezekiah, according to Isa. xxxvi. 13 sqq. and xxxvii. 9 sqq., to compel the surrender of Jerusalem and get Judah completely into his power. But if this is established, it cannot have been a long time after the defeat of Sennacherib before Jerusalem, when Nahum prophesied; not only because that event was thoroughly adapted to furnish the occasion for such a prophecy as the one contained in our prophet's book, and because it was an omen of the future and final judgment upon Asshur, but still more, because the allusions to the affliction brought upon Judah by Sennacherib are of such a kind that it must have still continued in the most vivid recollection of the prophet and the men of his time. We cannot do anything else, therefore, than subscribe to the view expressed by Vitringa, viz. that "the date of Nahum must be fixed a very short time after Isaiah and Micah, and therefore in the reign of Hezekiah, not only after the carrying away of the ten tribes, but also after the overthrow of Sennacherib (ch. i. 11, 13), from which the argument of the prophecy is taken, and the occasion for preaching the complete destruction of Nineveh and the kingdom of Assyria" (*Typ. doctr. prophet.* p. 37). The date of the composition of our book cannot be more exactly determined. The assumption that it was composed before the murder of Sennacherib, in the temple of his god Nisroch (Isa. xxxvii. 38; 2 Kings xix. 37), has no support in ch. i. 14. And it is equally impossible to infer from ch. i. 13 and i. 15 that our prophecy was uttered in the reign of Manasseh, and occasioned by the carrying away of the king to Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11).

The relation which exists between this prophecy and those of Isaiah is in the most perfect harmony with the composition of the former in the second half of the reign of Hezekiah. The resemblances which we find between Nahum iii. 5 and Isa. xlvii. 2, 3, ch. iii. 7, 10 and Isa. li. 19, 20, ch. i. 15 and Isa. lii. 1 and 7, are of such a nature that Isaiah could just as well have alluded to Nahum as Nahum to Isaiah. If Nahum composed his prophecy not long after the overthrow of Senna-

cherib, we must assume that the former was the case. The fact that in Nahum i. 8, 13 and iii. 10 there are resemblances to Isa. x. 23, 27 and xiii. 16, where our prophet is evidently the borrower, furnishes no decisive proof to the contrary. For the relation in which prophets who lived and laboured at the same time stood to one another was one of mutual giving and receiving; so that it cannot be immediately inferred from the fact that our prophet made use of a prophecy of his predecessor for his own purposes, that he must have been dependent upon him in all his kindred utterances. When, on the other hand, Ewald and Hitzig remove our prophecy to a much later period, and place it in the time of the later Median wars with Assyria, either the time of Phraortes (Herod. i. 102), or that of Cyaxares and his first siege of Nineveh (Herod. i. 103), they found this opinion upon the unscriptural assumption that it was nothing more than a production of human sagacity and political conjecture, which could only have been uttered "when a threatening expedition against Nineveh was already in full operation" (Ewald), and when the danger which threatened Nineveh was before his eyes,—a view which has its roots in the denial of the supernatural character of the prophecy, and is altogether destitute of any solid foundation.

The style of our prophet is not inferior to the classical style of Isaiah and Micah, either in power and originality of thought, or in clearness and purity of form; so that, as. R. Lowth (*De sacr. poësi Hebr.* § 281) has aptly observed, *ex omnibus minoribus prophetis nemo videtur æquare sublimitatem, ardorem et audaces spiritus Nahumi;* whereas Ewald, according to his preconceived opinion as to the prophet's age, "no longer finds in this prophet, who already formed one of the later prophets, so much inward strength, or purity and fulness of thought." For the exegetical writings on the book of Nahum, see my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, § 299, 300.

EXPOSITION.

THE JUDGMENT UPON NINEVEH DECREED BY GOD.—CHAP. I.

Jehovah, the jealous God and avenger of evil, before whose manifestation of wrath the globe trembles (vers. 2–6), will prove Himself a strong tower to His own people by destroying Nineveh (vers. 7–11), since He has determined to break the yoke which Asshur has laid upon Judah, and to destroy this enemy of His people (vers. 12–14).

Ver. 1. The heading runs thus: "*Burden concerning Nineveh; book of the prophecy of Nahum of Elkosh.*" The first sentence gives the substance and object, the second the form and author, of the proclamation which follows. מַשָּׂא signifies a burden, from נָשָׂא, to lift up, to carry, to heave. This meaning has very properly been retained by Jonathan, Aquila, Jerome, Luther, and others, in the headings to the prophetic oracle. Jerome observes on Hab. i. 1: "Massa never occurs in the title, except when it is evidently grave and full of weight and labour." On the other hand, the LXX. have generally rendered it λῆμμα in the headings to the oracles, or even ὅρασις, ὅραμα, ῥῆμα (Isa. xiii. sqq., xxx. 6); and most of the modern commentators since Cocceius and Vitringa, following this example, have attributed to the word the meaning of "utterance," and derived it from נָשָׂא, *effari*. But נשׂא has no more this meaning than נָשָׂא קוֹל can mean to utter the voice, either in Ex. xx. 7 and xxiii. 1, to which Hupfeld appeals in support of it, or in 2 Kings ix. 25, to which others appeal. The same may be said of מַשָּׂא, which never means *effatum*, utterance, and is never placed before simple announcements of salvation, but only before oracles of a threatening nature. Zech. ix. 1 and xii. 1 form no exception to this rule. Delitzsch (on Isa. xiii. 1) observes, with regard to the latter passage, that the promise has at least a dark foil, and in ch. ix. 1 sqq. the heathen nations of the Persian and Macedonian world-monarchy are threatened with a divine judgment which will break in pieces their imperial glory, and through which they are to be brought to conversion to Jehovah; "and it is just in this that the burden consists, which the word of God lays upon these nations, that they may be brought to conversion

through such a judgment from God" (Kliefoth). Even in Prov. xxx. 1 and xxxi. 1 *Massâ'* does not mean utterance. The words of Agur in Prov. xxx. 1 are a heavy burden, which is rolled upon the natural and conceited reason; they are punitive in their character, reproving human forwardness in the strongest terms; and in ch. xxxi. 1 *Massâ'* is the discourse with which king Lemuel reproved his mother. For the thorough vindication of this meaning of *Massâ'*, by an exposition of all the passages which have been adduced in support of the rendering "utterance," see Hengstenberg, *Christology*, on Zech. ix. 1, and O. Strauss on this passage. For *Nineveh*, see the comm. on Jonah i. 2. The burden, *i.e.* the threatening words, concerning Nineveh are defined in the second clause as *sēpher châzōn*, book of the seeing (or of the seen) of Nahum, *i.e.* of that which Nahum saw in spirit and prophesied concerning Nineveh. The unusual combination of *sēpher* with *châzōn*, which only occurs here, is probably intended to show that Nahum simply committed his prophecy concerning Nineveh to writing, and did not first of all announce it orally before the people. On *hâ'elqōshī* (the Elkoshite), see the Introduction.

Vers. 2–6. The description of the divine justice, and its judicial manifestation on the earth, with which Nahum introduces his prophecy concerning Nineveh, has this double object: first of all, to indicate the connection between the destruction of the capital of the Assyrian empire, which is about to be predicted, and the divine purpose of salvation; and secondly, to cut off at the very outset all doubt as to the realization of this judgment. Ver. 2. "*A God jealous and taking vengeance is Jehovah; an avenger is Jehovah, and Lord of wrathful fury; an avenger is Jehovah to His adversaries, and He is One keeping wrath to His enemies.* Ver. 3. *Jehovah is long-suffering and of great strength, and He does not acquit of guilt. Jehovah, His way is in the storm and in the tempest, and clouds are the dust of His feet.*" The prophecy commences with the words with which God expresses the energetic character of His holiness in the decalogue (Ex. xx. 5, cf. xxxiv. 14; Deut. iv. 24, v. 9; and Josh. xxiv. 19), where we find the form נַקֵּא for נָקֵה. Jehovah is a jealous God, who turns the burning zeal of His wrath against them that hate Him (Deut. vi. 15). His side of the energy of the divine zeal predominates here, as the following predicate,

the three-times repeated נָקָם, clearly shows. The strengthening of the idea of *nōqēm* involved in the repetition of it three times (cf. Jer. vii. 4, xxii. 29), is increased still further by the apposition *ba'al chēmâh*, possessor of the wrathful heat, equivalent to the wrathful God (cf. Prov. xxix. 22, xxii. 24). The vengeance applies to His adversaries, towards whom He bears ill-will. *Nâtar*, when predicated of God, as in Lev. xix. 18 and Ps. ciii. 9, signifies to keep or bear wrath. God does not indeed punish immediately; He is long-suffering (אֶרֶךְ אַפַּיִם, Ex. xxxiv. 6, Num. xiv. 18, etc.). His long-suffering is not weak indulgence, however, but an emanation from His love and mercy; for He is *g'dōl-kōăch*, great in strength (Num. xiv. 17), and does not leave unpunished (נַקֵּה וגו׳ after Ex. xxxiv. 7 and Num. xiv. 18; see at Ex. xx. 7). His great might to punish sinners, He has preserved from of old; His way is in the storm and tempest. With these words Nahum passes over to a description of the manifestations of divine wrath upon sinners in great national judgments which shake the world (שְׂעָרָה as in Job ix. 17 = סַעֲרָה, which is connected with סוּפָה in Isa. xxix. 6 and Ps. lxxxiii. 16). These and similar descriptions are founded upon the revelations of God, when bringing Israel out of Egypt, and at the conclusion of the covenant at Sinai, when the Lord came down upon the mountain in clouds, fire, and vapour of smoke (Ex. xix. 16–18). Clouds are the dust of His feet. The Lord comes down from heaven in the clouds. As man goes upon the dust, so Jehovah goes upon the clouds.

Ver. 4. "*He threateneth the sea, and drieth it up, and maketh all the rivers dry up. Bashan and Carmel fade, and the blossom of Lebanon fadeth.* Ver. 5. *Mountains shake before Him, and the hills melt away; the earth heaveth before Him, and the globe, and all the inhabitants thereon.* Ver. 6. *Before His fury who may stand? and who rise up at the burning of His wrath? His burning heat poureth itself out like fire, and the rocks are rent in pieces by Him.*" In the rebuking of the sea there is an allusion to the drying up of the Red Sea for the Israelites to pass through (cf. Ps. cvi. 9); but it is generalized here, and extended to every sea and river, which the Almighty can smite in His wrath, and cause to dry up. וַיַּבְּשֵׁהוּ for וַיְיַבֵּשֵׁהוּ, the vowelless י of the third pers. being fused into one with the first radical sound, as in וַיִּדּוּ in Lam. iii. 53 (cf. Ges. § 69, Anm. 6, and Ewald

§ 232-3). Bashan, Carmel, and Lebanon are mentioned as very fruitful districts, abounding in a vigorous growth of vegetation and large forests, the productions of which God could suddenly cause to fade and wither in His wrath. Yea more: the mountains tremble and the hills melt away (compare the similar description in Mic. i. 4, and the explanation given there). The earth lifts itself, *i.e.* starts up from its place (cf. Isa. xiii. 13), with everything that dwells upon the surface of the globe. תִּשָּׂא from נָשָׂא, used intransitively, "to rise," as in Ps. lxxxix. 10 and Hos. xiii. 1; not *conclamat s. tollit vocem* (J. H. Michaelis, Burk, Strauss). תֵּבֵל, *lit.* the fertile globe, always signifies the whole of the habitable earth, ἡ οἰκουμένη; and יוֹשְׁבֵי בָהּ, not merely the men (Ewald), but all living creatures (cf. Joel i. 18, 20). No one can stand before such divine wrath, which pours out like consuming fire (Deut. iv. 24), and rends rocks in pieces (1 Kings xix. 11; Jer. xxiii. 29; cf. Jer. x. 10; Mal. iii. 2).

Vers. 7–11. But the wrath of God does not fall upon those who trust in the Lord; it only falls upon His enemies. With this turn Nahum prepares the way in vers. 7 sqq. for proclaiming the judgment of wrath upon Nineveh. Ver. 7. "*Good is Jehovah, a refuge in the day of trouble; and He knoweth those who trust in Him.* Ver. 8. *And with an overwhelming flood will He make an end of her place, and pursue His enemies into darkness.*" Even in the manifestation of His wrath God proves His goodness; for the judgment, by exterminating the wicked, brings deliverance to the righteous who trust in the Lord, out of the affliction prepared for them by the wickedness of the world. The predicate טוֹב is more precisely defined by the apposition לְמָעוֹז וגו׳, for a refuge = a refuge in time of trouble. The goodness of the Lord is seen in the fact that He is a refuge in distress. The last clause says to whom: viz. to those who trust in Him. They are known by Him. "To know is just the same as not to neglect; or, expressed in a positive form, the care or providence of God in the preservation of the faithful" (Calvin). For the fact, compare Ps. xxxiv. 9, xlvi. 2, Jer. xvi. 19. And because the Lord is a refuge to His people, He will put an end to the oppressor of His people, viz. Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, and that with an overwhelming flood. *Sheteph*, overwhelming, is a figure denoting

the judgment sweeping over a land or kingdom, through the invasion of hostile armies (cf. Isa. viii. 7; Dan. xi. 26, 40). עָבַר, overflowed by a river (cf. Isa. viii. 8; Hab. iii. 10; Dan. xi. 40). עָשָׂה כָלָה, to put an end to anything, as in Isa. x. 23. מְקוֹמָהּ is the accusative of the object: make her place a vanishing one. כָּלָה, the fem. of כָּלֶה, an adjective in a neuter sense, that which is vanishing away. The suffix in מְקוֹמָהּ refers to *Nineveh* in the heading (ver. 1): either Nineveh, personified as a queen (ch. ii. 7, iii. 4), is distinguished from her seat (Hitzig); or what is much more simple, the city itself is meant, and "her place" is to be understood in this sense, that with the destruction of the city even the place where it stood would cease to be the site of a city, with which Marck aptly compares the phrase, "its place knoweth man no more" (Job vii. 10, viii. 18, xx. 9). אֹיְבָיו are the inhabitants of Nineveh, or the Assyrians generally, as the enemies of Israel. יְרַדֵּף־חֹשֶׁךְ, not darkness will pursue its enemies; for this view is irreconcilable with the *makkeph:* but to pursue with darkness, *chōshekh* being an accusative either of place or of more precise definition, used in an instrumental sense. The former is the simpler view, and answers better to the parallelism of the clauses. As the city is to vanish and leave no trace behind, so shall its inhabitants perish in darkness.

The reason for all this is assigned in vers. 9 sqq. Ver. 9. "*What think ye of Jehovah? He makes an end; the affliction will not arise twice.* Ver. 10. *For though they be twisted together like thorns, and as if intoxicated with their wine, they shall be devoured like dry stubble.* Ver. 11. *From thee has one come out, who meditated evil against Jehovah, who advised worthlessness.*" The question in ver. 9*a* is not addressed to the enemy, viz. the Assyrians, as very many commentators suppose: "What do ye meditate against Jehovah?" For although *châshabh ʾel* is used in Hos. vii. 15 for a hostile device with regard to Jehovah, the supposition that *ʾel* is used here for *ʿal*, according to a later usage of the language, is precluded by the fact that חָשַׁב עַל is actually used in this sense in ver. 11. Moreover, the last clause does not suit this view of the question. The words, "the affliction will not stand up, or not rise up a second time," cannot refer to the Assyrians, or mean that the infliction of a second judgment upon Nineveh will be unnecessary, because

the city will utterly fall to the ground in the first judgment, and completely vanish from the earth (Hitzig). For צָרָה points back to בְּיוֹם צָרָה, and therefore must be the calamity which has fallen upon Judah, or upon those who trust in the Lord, on the part of Nineveh or Asshur (Marck, Maurer, and Strauss). This is confirmed by ver. 11 and ch. i. 15, where this thought is definitely expressed. Consequently the question, "What think ye with regard to Jehovah?" can only be addressed to the Judæans, and must mean, "Do ye think that Jehovah cannot or will not fulfil His threat upon Nineveh?" (Cyr., Marck, Strauss.) The prophet addresses these words to the anxious minds, which were afraid of fresh invasions on the part of the Assyrians. To strengthen their confidence, he answers the question proposed, by repeating the thought expressed in ver. 8. He (Jehovah) is making an end, *sc.* of the enemy of His people; and he gives a further reason for this in ver. 10. The participial clauses עַד סִירִים to סְבוּאִים are to be taken conditionally: are (or were) they even twisted like thorns. עַד סִירִים, to thorns = as thorns (עַד is given correctly by J. H. Michaelis: *eo usque ut spinas perplexitate æquent;* compare Ewald, § 219). The comparison of the enemy to thorns expresses "*firmatum callidumque nocendi studium*" (Marck), and has been well explained by Ewald thus: "crisp, crafty, and cunning; so that one would rather not go near them, or have anything to do with them" (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 6 and Mic. vii. 4). כְּסָבְאָם סְבוּאִים, not "wetted like their wet" (Hitzig), nor "as it were drowned in wine, so that fire can do no more harm to them than to anything else that is wet" (Ewald); for סָבָא neither means to wet nor to drown, but to drink, to carouse; and סָבוּא means drunken, intoxicated. סֹבֶא is strong unmixed wine (see Delitzsch on Isa. i. 22). "Their wine" is the wine which they are accustomed to drink. The simile expresses the audacity and hardiness with which the Assyrians regarded themselves as invincible, and applies very well to the gluttony and revelry which prevailed at the Assyrian court; even if the account given by Diod. Sic. (ii. 26), that when Sardanapalus had three times defeated the enemy besieging Nineveh, in his great confidence in his own good fortune, he ordered a drinking carousal, in the midst of which the enemy, who had been made acquainted with the fact, made a fresh

attack, and conquered Nineveh, rests upon a legendary dressing up of the facts. אֻכְּלוּ, devoured by fire, is a figure signifying utter destruction; and the perfect is prophetic, denoting what will certainly take place. Like dry stubble: cf. Isa. v. 24, xlvii. 14, and Joel ii. 5. מָלֵא is not to be taken, as Ewald supposes (§ 279, *a*), as strengthening יָבֵשׁ, "fully dry," but is to be connected with the verb adverbially, and is simply placed at the end of the sentence for the sake of emphasis (Ges., Maurer, and Strauss). This will be the end of the Assyrians, because he who meditates evil against Jehovah has come forth out of Nineveh. In מִמֵּךְ Nineveh is addressed, the representative of the imperial power of Assyria, which set itself to destroy the Israelitish kingdom of God. It might indeed be objected to this explanation of the verse, that the words in vers. 12*b* and 13 are addressed to Zion or Judah, whereas Nineveh or Asshur is spoken of both in what precedes (vers. 8 and 10) and in what follows (ver. 12*a*) in the third person. On this ground Hoelem. and Strauss refer מִמֵּךְ also to Judah, and adopt this explanation: "from thee (Judah) will the enemy who has hitherto oppressed thee have gone away" (taking יָצָא as *fut. exact.*, and יָצָא מִן as in Isa. xlix. 17). But this view does not suit the context. After the utter destruction of the enemy has been predicted in ver. 10, we do not expect to find the statement that it will have gone away from Judah, especially as there is nothing said in what precedes about any invasion of Judah. The meditation of evil against Jehovah refers to the design of the Assyrian conquerors to destroy the kingdom of God in Israel, as the Assyrian himself declares in the blasphemous words which Isaiah puts into the mouth of Rabshakeh (Isa. xxxvi. 14-20), to show the wicked pride of the enemy. This address merely expresses the feeling cherished at all times by the power of the world towards the kingdom of God. It is in the plans devised for carrying this feeling into action that the יֹעֵץ בְּלִיָּעַל, the advising of worthlessness, consists. This is the only meaning that בְּלִיָּעַל has, not that of destruction.

Vers. 12-14. The power of Nineveh will be destroyed, to break the yoke laid upon Judah. Ver. 12. "*Thus saith Jehovah, Though they be unconsumed, and therefore numerous, yet are they thus mowed down, and have passed away. I have bowed thee down, I will bow thee down no more.* Ver. 13. *And*

now shall I break his yoke from off thee, and break thy fetters in pieces. Ver. 14. *And Jehovah hath given commandment concerning thee, no more of thy name will be sown: from the house of thy God I cut off graven image and molten work: I prepare thy grave; for thou art found light.*" To confirm the threat expressed in vers. 8–11, Nahum explains the divine purpose more fully. Jehovah hath spoken: the completeness and strength of her army will be of no help to Nineveh. It is mowed down, because Judah is to be delivered from its oppressor. The words שְׁלֵמִים to וְעָבַר refer to the enemy, the warlike hosts of Nineveh, which are to be destroyed notwithstanding their great and full number. *Shâlēm, integer*, with strength undiminished, both outwardly and inwardly, *i.e.* both numerous and strong. וְכֵן רַבִּים, and so, *i.e.* of such a nature, just because they are of full number, or numerous. וְכֵן נָגֹזוּ, and so, *i.e.* although of such a nature, they will nevertheless be mowed down. גָּזַז, taken from the mowing of the meadows, is a figure denoting complete destruction. וְעָבַר is not impersonal, *actum est, sc. de iis*, but signifies it is away, or has vanished. The singular is used with special emphasis, the numerous army being all embraced in the unity of one man: "he paints the whole people as vanishing away, just as if one little man were carried off" (Strauss). With וְעִנִּתִךְ the address turns to Judah. The words are not applicable to the Assyrians, to whom Abarbanel, Grotius, Ewald, and Hitzig refer this clause; for Asshur is not only bowed down or chastened, but utterly destroyed. עִנִּתִךְ refers to the oppression which Judah had suffered from the Assyrians in the time of Ahaz and Hezekiah. This shall not be repeated, as has already been promised in ver. 9*b*. For now will the Lord break the yoke which this enemy has laid upon Judah. וְעַתָּה, but now, is attached adversatively to עִנִּתִךְ. The suffix to מֹטֵהוּ refers to the enemy, which has its seat in Nineveh. For the figure of the yoke, cf. Lev. xxvi. 13, Jer. xxvii. 2, xxviii. 10, Ezek. xxxiv. 27, etc.; and for the fact itself, Isa. x. 27. The words do not refer to the people of the ten tribes, who were pining like slaves in exile (Hitzig); for Nahum makes no allusion to them at all, but to Judah (cf. ch. i. 15), upon whom the Assyrians had laid the yoke of tribute from the time of Ahaz. This was first of all shaken off in the reign of Hezekiah, through the overthrow of Sennacherib; but

it was not yet completely broken, so long as there was a possibility that Assyria might rise again with new power, as in fact it did in the reign of Manasseh, when Assyrian generals invaded Judah and carried off this king to Babylon (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11). It was only broken when the Assyrian power was overthrown through the conquest and destruction of Nineveh. This view, which is required by the futures *'eshbōr* and *'ănattēq*, is confirmed by ver. 14, for there the utter extermination of Assyria is clearly expressed. *Vetsivvâh* is not a perfect with *Vav rel.;* but the *Vav* is a simple copula: "*and* (= for) Jehovah has commanded." The perfect refers to the divine purpose, which has already been formed, even though its execution is still in the future. This purpose runs thus: "Of thy seed shall no more be sown, *i.e.* thou wilt have no more descendants" ("the people and name are to become extinct," Strauss; cf. Isa. xiv. 20). It is not the king of Assyria who is here addressed, but the Assyrian power personified as a single man, as we may see from what follows, according to which the idols are to be rooted out along with the seed from the house of God, *i.e.* out of the idol temples (cf. Isa. xxxvii. 38, xliv. 13). *Pesel* and *massēkhâh* are combined, as in Deut. xxvii. 15, to denote every kind of idolatrous image. For the idolatry of Assyria, see Layard's *Nineveh and its Remains*, ii. p. 439 sqq. אָשִׂים קִבְרְךָ cannot mean, "I make the temple of thy god into a grave," although this meaning has already been expressed in the Chaldee and Syriac; and the Masoretic accentuation, which connects the words with what precedes, is also founded upon this view. If an object had to be supplied to אָשִׂים from the context, it must be *pesel ūmassēkhâh;* but there would be no sense in "I make thine idol into a grave." There is no other course left, therefore, than to take קִבְרְךָ as the nearest and only object to אָשִׂים, "I lay, *i.e.* prepare thy grave," כִּי קַלּוֹתָ, because, when weighed according to thy moral worth (Job xxxi. 6), thou hast been found light (cf. Dan. v. 27). Hence the widespread opinion, that the murder of Sennacherib (Isa. xxxvii. 38; 2 Kings xix. 37) is predicted here, must be rejected as erroneous and irreconcilable with the words, and not even so far correct as that Nahum makes any allusion to that event. He simply announces the utter destruction of the Assyrian power, together with its idolatry, upon which that power rested.

Jehovah has prepared a grave for the people and their idols, because they have been found light when weighed in the balances of righteousness.

CONQUEST, PLUNDERING, AND DESTRUCTION OF NINEVEH.—CHAP I. 15–II. 13 (HEB. BIB. CHAP. II.).

Jehovah sends a powerful and splendid army against Nineveh, to avenge the disgrace brought upon Judah and restore its glory (i. 15–ii. 4). The city is conquered; its inhabitants flee or wander into captivity; the treasures are plundered (vers. 5–10); and the powerful city perishes with all its glory, and leaves not a trace behind (vers. 11–13).

Ch. i. 15–ii. 4. Judah hears the glad tidings, that its oppressor is utterly destroyed. A warlike army marches against Nineveh, which that city cannot resist, because the Lord will put an end to the oppression of His people. Ch. i. 15. "*Behold, upon the mountains the feet of the messengers of joy, proclaiming salvation! Keep thy feasts, O Judah; pay thy vows: for the worthless one will no more go through thee; he is utterly cut off.*" The destruction of the Assyrian, announced in ch. i. 14, is so certain, that Nahum commences the description of its realization with an appeal to Judah, to keep joyful feasts, as the miscreant is utterly cut off. The form in which he utters this appeal is to point to messengers upon the mountains, who are bringing the tidings of peace to the kingdom of Judah. The first clause is applied in Isa. lii. 7 to the description of the Messianic salvation. The messengers of joy appear upon the mountains, because their voice can be heard far and wide from thence. The mountains are those of the kingdom of Judah, and the allusion to the feet of the messengers paints as it were for the eye the manner in which they hasten on the mountains with the joyful news. מְבַשֵּׂר is collective, every one who brings the glad tidings. *Shâlōm*, peace and salvation: here both in one. The summons, to keep feasts, etc., proceeds from the prophet himself, and is, as Ursinus says, "*partim gratulatoria, partim exhortatoria.*" The former, because the feasts could not be properly kept during the

oppression by the enemy, or at any rate could not be visited by those who lived at a distance from the temple; the latter, because the *chaggīm*, *i.e.* the great yearly feasts, were feasts of thanksgiving for the blessings of salvation, which Israel owed to the Lord, so that the summons to celebrate these feasts involved the admonition to thank the Lord for His mercy in destroying the hostile power of the world. This is expressed still more clearly in the summons to pay their vows. בְּלִיָּעַל, abstract for concrete = אִישׁ בל׳, as in 2 Sam. xxiii. 6 and Job xxxiv. 18. נִכְרַת is not a participle, but a perfect in pause.

With ch. ii. 1 the prophecy turns to Nineveh. Ver. 1. "*A dasher in pieces comes against thee. Keep thy fortress! Look out upon the way, fortify the loins, exert thy strength greatly!* Ver. 2. *For Jehovah returneth to the eminence of Jacob as to the eminence of Israel; for plunderers have plundered them, and their vines have they thrown to the ground.*" עַל־פָּנֶיךָ cannot be addressed to Judah, as in i. 15 (Chald., Rashi, etc.). It cannot indeed be objected that in ch. i. 15 the destruction of Asshur has already been announced, since the prophet might nevertheless have returned to the time when Asshur had made war upon Judah, in order to depict its ruin with greater precision. But such an assumption does not agree with the second clause of the verse as compared with ver. 2, and still less with the description of the approaching enemy which follows in ver. 3, since this is unquestionably, according to ver. 5, the power advancing against Nineveh, and destroying that city. We must therefore assume that we have here a sudden change in the person addressed, as in ch. i. 11 and 12, 13 and 14. The enemy is called מְפִיץ, "a dasher in pieces;" not a war-hammer (cf. Prov. xxv. 18), because עָלָה, the standing expression for the advance of a hostile army, does not agree with this. עַל־פָּנֶיךָ, against thy face, *i.e.* pitching his tent opposite to the city (there is no good reason for altering the suffix into פָּנַיִךְ, as Ewald and Hitzig propose). Against this enemy Nineveh is to bring all possible power of resistance. This is not irony, but simply a poetical turn given to the thought, that Nineveh will not be able to repulse this enemy any more. The *inf. abs. nâtsōr* stands emphatically for the imperative, as is frequently the case, and is continued in the imperative. *Mᵉtsūrâh* is the enclosure of a city, hence the

wall or fortification. צֹפֵה־דֶרֶךְ, looking watchfully upon the way by which the enemy comes, to repulse it or prevent it from entering the city. חַזֵּק מ׳, make the loins strong, *i.e.* equip thyself with strength, the loins being the seat of strength. The last clause expresses the same thought, and is merely added to strengthen the meaning. The explanatory *kī* in ver. 2 (3) does not follow upon ver. 1*b* in the sense of "summon up all thy strength, *for* it is God in whose strength the enemy fights" (Strauss), but to ver. 1*a* or ch. i. 15*b*. The train of thought is the following: Asshur will be utterly destroyed by the enemy advancing against Nineveh, for Jehovah will re-establish the glory of Israel, which Asshur has destroyed. שָׁב (perf. proph.) has not the force of the *hiphil*, *reducere*, *restituere*, either here or in Ps. lxxxv. 5 and Isa. lii. 8, and other passages, where the modern lexicons give it, but means to turn round, or return to a person, and is construed with the accusative, as in Num. x. 36, Ex. iv. 20, and Gen. l. 14, although in actual fact the return of Jehovah to the eminence of Jacob involves its restoration. גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב, that of which Jacob is proud, *i.e.* the eminence and greatness or glory accruing to Israel by virtue of its election to be the nation of God, which the enemy into whose power it had been given up on account of its rebellion against God had taken away (see at Amos vi. 8). *Jacob* does not stand for Judah, nor *Israel* for the ten tribes, for Nahum never refers to the ten tribes in distinction from Judah; and Ob. 18, where Jacob is distinguished from the house of Joseph, is of a totally different character. Both names stand here for the whole of Israel (of the twelve tribes), and, as Cyril has shown, the distinction is this: Jacob is the natural name which the people inherited from their forefather, and Israel the spiritual name which they had received from God. Strauss gives the meaning correctly thus: Jehovah will so return to the eminence of His people, who are named after Jacob, that this eminence shall become the eminence of Israel, *i.e.* of the people of God; in other words, He will exalt the nation once more to the lofty eminence of its divine calling (כְּ used in the same manner as in 1 Sam. xxv. 36). This will He do, because plunderers have plundered (*bâqaq*, *evacuare*) them (the Israelites), and destroyed their vines, cast them to the ground; that He may avenge the reproach cast upon His people. The plunderers are the heathen

nations, especially the Assyrians. The vines are the Israelites; Israel as a people or kingdom is the vineyard (Isa. v. 1; Jer. xii. 10; Ps. lxxx. 9 sqq.); the vines are the families, and the branches (*z'mōrīm* from *z'mōrâh*) the members.

After assigning this reason for the divine purpose concerning Asshur, the prophet proceeds in vers. 3 sqq. to depict the army advancing towards Nineveh, viz. in ver. 3 its appearance, and in ver. 4 the manner in which it sets itself in motion for battle. Ver. 3. "*The shield of His heroes is made red, the valiant men are clothed in crimson: in the fire of the steel-bosses are the chariots, on the day of His equipment; and the cypresses are swung about.* Ver. 4. *The chariots rave in the streets, they run over one another on the roads; their appearance is like the torches, they run about like lightning.*" The suffix attached to *gibbōrēhū* (His heroes) might be taken as referring to *mēphīts* in ver. 1 (2); but it is more natural to refer it to Jehovah in ver. 2 (3), as having summoned the army against Nineveh (cf. Isa. xiii. 3). The shields are reddened, *i.e.* not radiant (Ewald), but coloured with red, and that not with the blood of enemies who have been slain (Aberbanel and Grotius), but either with red colour with which they are painted, or what is still more probable, with the copper with which they are overlaid: see Josephus, *Ant.* xiii. 12, 5 (Hitzig). אַנְשֵׁי־חַיִל are not fighting men generally, *i.e.* soldiers, but brave men, heroes (cf. Judg. iii. 29, 1 Sam. xxxi. 12, 2 Sam. xi. 16, equivalent to *b'nē chayil* in 1 Sam. xviii. 17, etc.). מְתֻלָּעִים, *ἅπ. λεγ.*, a denom. of תּוֹלָע, *coccus:* clothed in coccus or crimson. The fighting dress of the nations of antiquity was frequently blood-red (see Æliani, *Var. hist.* vi. 6).[1] The *ἅπ. λεγ. p'lâdōth* is certainly not used for *lappīdīm*, torches; but in both Arabic and Syriac *paldâh* signifies steel (see Ges. *Lex.*). But *p'lâdōth* are not scythes, which would suggest the idea of scythe-chariots (Michaelis, Ewald, and others); for scythe-chariots were first introduced by Cyrus, and were unknown before his time to the Medes, the Syrians, the Arabians, and also to the ancient Egyptians (see at Josh. xvii. 16). *P'lâdōth* probably denotes the steel covering of the chariots, as the Assyrian war-chariots were

[1] Valerius observes on this: "They used Poenic tunics in battle, to disguise and hide the blood of their wounds, not lest the sight of it should fill them with alarm, but lest it should inspire the enemy with confidence."

adorned according to the monuments with ornaments of metal.[1] The army of the enemy presents the appearance described בְּיוֹם הֲכִינוֹ, in the day of his equipment. הֵכִין, to prepare, used of the equipping of an army for an attack or for battle, as in Jer. xlvi. 14, Ezek. vii. 14, xxxviii. 7. The suffix refers to Jehovah, like that in גְּבוּרֵיהוּ; compare Isa. xiii. 4, where Jehovah raises an army for war with Babylon. *Habbᵉrōshīm*, the cypresses, are no doubt lances or javelins made of cypress-wood (Grotius and others), not *magnates* (Chald., Kimchi, and others), or *viri hastati*. הָרְעָלוּ, to be swung, or brandished, in the hands of the warriors equipped for battle. The army advances to the assault (ver. 4), and presses into the suburbs. The chariots rave (go mad) in the streets. הִתְהוֹלֲלוּ, to behave one's self foolishly, to rave, used here as in Jer. xlvi. 9 for mad driving, or driving with insane rapidity (see 2 Kings ix. 20). הִשְׁתַּקְשְׁקוּ, *hithpalel* of שָׁקַק, to run (Joel ii. 9); in the intensive form, to run over one another, *i.e.* to run in such a way that they appear as though they would run over one another. חוּצוֹת and רְחֹבוֹת are roads and open spaces, not outside the city, but inside (cf. Amos v. 16; Ps. cxliv. 13, 14; Prov. i. 20), and, indeed, as we may see from what follows, in the suburbs surrounding the inner city or citadel. Their appearance (viz. that of the chariots as they drive raving about) is like torches. The feminine suffix to מַרְאֵיהֶן can only refer to הָרֶכֶב, notwithstanding the fact that elsewhere רֶכֶב is always construed as a masculine, and that it is so here in the first clauses. For the suffix cannot refer to רְחֹבוֹת (Hoelem. and Strauss), because הָרֶכֶב is the subject in the following clause as well as in the two previous ones. The best way probably is to take it as a neuter, so that it might refer not to the chariots only, but to everything in and upon the chariots. The appearance of the

[1] "The chariots of the Assyrians," says Strauss, "as we see them on the monuments, glare with shining things, made either of iron or steel, battle-axes, bows, arrows, and shields, and all kinds of weapons; the horses are also ornamented with crowns and red fringes, and even the poles of the carriages are made resplendent with shining suns and moons: add to these the soldiers in armour riding in the chariots; and it could not but be the case, that when illumined by the rays of the sun above them, they would have all the appearance of flames as they flew hither and thither with great celerity." Compare also the description of the Assyrian war-chariots given by Layard in his *Nineveh and its Remains*, vol. ii. p. 348.

chariots, as they drove about with the speed of lightning, richly ornamented with bright metal (see on ver. 3), and occupied by warriors in splendid clothes and dazzling armour, might very well be compared to torches and flashing lightning. רִצֵּץ, *pilel* of רוּץ (not *poel* of רָצַץ, Judg. x. 8), *cursitare*, used of their driving with lightning-speed.

Vers. 5–10. The Assyrian tries to repel this attack, but all in vain. Ver. 5. "*He remembers his glorious ones: they stumble in their paths; they hasten to the wall of it, and the tortoise is set up.* Ver. 6. *The gates are opened in the rivers, and the palace is dissolved.* Ver. 7. *It is determined: she is laid bare, carried off, and her maids groan like the cry of doves, smiting on their breasts.*" On the approach of the war-chariots of the enemy to the attack, the Assyrian remembers his generals and warriors, who may possibly be able to defend the city and drive back the foe. That the subject changes with *yizkōr*, is evident from the change in the number, *i.e.* from the singular as compared with the plurals in vers. 3 and 4, and is placed beyond the reach of doubt by the contents of vers. 5 sqq., which show that the reference is to the attempt to defend the city. The subject to *yizkōr* is the Assyrian (בְּלִיַּעַל, ver. 1), or the king of Asshur (ch. iii. 18). He remembers his glorious ones, *i.e.* remembers that he has *'addīrīm*, *i.e.* not merely generals (*μεγιστᾶνες*, LXX.), but good soldiers, including the generals (as in ch. iii. 18, Judg. v. 13, Neh. iii. 5). He sends for them, but they stumble in their paths. From terror at the violent assault of the foe, their knees lose their tension (the plural *hălīkhōth* is not to be corrected into the singular according to the *keri*, as the word always occurs in the plural). They hasten to the wall of it (Nineveh); there is הַסּוֹכֵךְ set up: *i.e.* literally the covering one, not the defender, *præsidium militare* (Hitzig), but the tortoise, *testudo*.[1] The prophet's description passes rapidly from

[1] Not, however, the tortoise formed by the shields of the soldiers, held close together above their heads (Liv. xxxiv. 9), since these are never found upon the Assyrian monuments (*vid.* Layard), but a kind of battering-ram, of which there are several different kinds, either a moveable tower, with a battering-ram, consisting of a light framework, covered with basket-work, or else a framework without any tower, either with an ornamented covering, or simply covered with skins, and moving upon four or six wheels. See the description, with illustrations, in Layard's *Nineveh*, ii. pp. 366–370, and Strauss's commentary on this passage.

the assault upon the city wall to the capture of the city itself (ver. 6). The opened or opening gates of the rivers are neither those approaches to the city which were situated on the bank of the Tigris, and were opened by the overflowing of the river, in support of which appeal has been made to the statement of Diodor. Sic. ii. 27, that the city wall was destroyed for the space of twenty stadia by the overflowing of the Tigris; for "gates of the rivers" cannot possibly stand for gates opened by rivers. Still less can it be those roads of the city which led to the gates, and which were flooded with people instead of water (Hitzig), or with enemies, who were pressing from the gates into the city like overflowing rivers (Ros.); nor even gates through which rivers flow, *i.e.* sluices, namely those of the concentric canals issuing from the Tigris, with which the palace could be laid under water (Vatabl., Burck, Hitzig, ed. 1); but as Luther renders it, "gates on the waters," *i.e.* situated on the rivers, or gates in the city wall, which were protected by the rivers; "gates most strongly fortified, both by nature and art" (Tuch, *de Nino urbe*, p. 67, Strauss, and others), for *n'hârōth* must be understood as signifying the Tigris and its tributaries and canals. At any rate, there were such gates in Nineveh, since the city, which stood at the junction of the Khosr with the Tigris, in the slope of the (by no means steep) rocky bank, was to some extent so built in the alluvium, that the natural course of the Khosr had to be dammed off from the plain chosen for the city by three stone dams, remnants of which are still to be seen; and a canal was cut above this point, which conducted the water to the plain of the city, where it was turned both right and left into the city moats, but had a waste channel through the city. To the south, however, another small collection of waters helped to fill the trenches. "The wall on the side towards the river consisted of a slightly curved line, which connected together the mouths of the trenches, but on the land side it was built at a short distance from the trenches. The wall on the river side now borders upon meadows, which are only flooded at high water; but the soil has probably been greatly elevated, and at the time when the city was built this was certainly river" (see M. v. Niebuhr, *Geschichte Assurs u. Babels*, p. 280; and the outlines of the plan of the ground on which Nineveh stood, p. 284). The

words of the prophet are not to be understood as referring to any particular gate, say the western, either alone, or *par excellence*, as Tuch supposes, but apply quite generally to the gates of the city, since the rivers are only mentioned for the purpose of indicating the strength of the gates. As Luther has correctly explained it, "the gates of the rivers, however firm in other respects, and with no easy access, will now be easily occupied, yea, have been already opened." The palace melts away, not, however, from the floods of water which flow through the open gates. This literal rendering of the words is irreconcilable with the situation of the palaces in Nineveh, since they were built in the form of terraces upon the tops of hills, either natural or artificial, and could not be flooded with water. The words are figurative. *Mūg*, to melt, dissolve, *i.e.* to vanish through anxiety and alarm; and הֵיכָל, the palace, for the inhabitants of the palace. "When the gates, protected by the rivers, are broken open by the enemy, the palace, *i.e.* the reigning Nineveh, vanishes in terror" (Hitzig). For her sway has now come to an end. הֻצַּב: the *hophal* of נָצַב, in the *hiphil*, to establish, to determine (Deut. xxxii. 8; Ps. lxxiv. 17; and Chald. Dan. ii. 45, vi. 13); hence it is established, *i.e.* is determined, *sc.* by God: she will be made bare; *i.e.* Nineveh, the queen, or mistress of the nations, will be covered with shame. גִּלְּתָה is not to be taken as interchangeable with the *hophal* הָגְלָה, to be carried away, but means to be uncovered, after the *piel* to uncover, *sc.* the shame or nakedness (ch. iii. 5; cf. Isa. xlvii. 2, 3; Hos. ii. 12). הֹעֲלָה, for הֶעֱלָה (see Ges. § 63, Anm. 4), to be driven away, or led away, like the *niph.* in Jer. xxxvii. 11, 2 Sam. ii. 27.[1] The laying bare and carrying away denote the complete destruction of Nineveh. אֲמָהֹתֶיהָ, *ancillæ ejus, i.e. Nini.* The "maids" of the city of Nineveh personified as a queen are not the states

[1] Of the different explanations that have been given of this hemistich, the supposition, which dates back as far as the Chaldee, that *huzzab* signifies the queen, or is the name of the queen (Ewald and Rückert), is destitute of any tenable foundation, and is no better than Hitzig's fancy, that we should read וְהַצָּב, "and the lizard is discovered, fetched up," and that this "reptile" is Nineveh. The objection offered to our explanation, viz. that it would only be admissible if it were immediately followed by the *decretum divinum* in its full extent, and not merely by one portion of it, rests upon a misinterpretation of the following words, which do not contain merely a portion of the purpose of God.

subject to her rule (Theodor., Cyr., Jerome, and others),—for throughout this chapter Nineveh is spoken of simply as the capital of the Assyrian empire,—but the inhabitants of Nineveh, who are represented as maids, mourning over the fate of their mistress. *Nâhag*, to pant, to sigh, for which *hâgâh* is used in other passages where the cooing of doves is referred to (cf. Isa. xxxviii. 14, lix. 11). בְּקוֹל יוֹנִים instead of בְּיוֹנִים, probably to express the loudness of the moaning. *Tōphēph*, to smite, used for the smiting of the timbrels in Ps. lxviii. 26; here, to smite upon the breast. Compare *pectus pugnis cædere*, or *palmis infestis tundere* (*e.g.* Juv. xiii. 167; Virg. *Æn.* i. 481, and other passages), as an expression of violent agony in deep mourning (cf. Luke xviii. 13, xxiii. 27). לִבְבֹתָן for לִבְבֵיהֶן is the plural, although this is generally written לִבּוֹת; and as the י is frequently omitted as a sign of the plural (cf. Ewald, § 258, *a*), there is no good ground for reading לִבְבָהֶן, as Hitzig proposes.

Vers. 8–10. At the conquest of Nineveh the numerous inhabitants flee, and the rich city is plundered. Ver. 8. "*And Nineveh like a water-pond all her days. And they flee! Stand ye, O stand! and no one turns round.* Ver. 9. *Take silver as booty, take ye gold! And no end to the furnishing with immense quantity of all kinds of ornamental vessels.* Ver. 10. *Emptying and devastation! and the heart has melted, and trembling of the knees, and labour pain in all loins, and the countenance of every one withdraws its ruddiness.*" Nineveh is compared to a pool, not merely with reference to the multitude of men who had gathered together there, but, as water is everywhere an element of life, also with reference to the wealth and prosperity which accrued to this imperial city out of the streaming together of so many men and so many different peoples. Compare Jer. li. 13, where Babel is addressed as "Thou that dwellest on many waters, art rich in many treasures." מִימֵי הָיְא, since the days that she exists. הָיְא = אֲשֶׁר הָיְא, the relation being indicated by the construct state; מִן הוּא in Isa. xviii. 2 is different. *But they flee.* The subject to נָסִים is not the waters, although *nūs* is applied to water in Ps. civ. 7, but, as what follows shows, the masses of men who are represented as water. These flee away without being stopped by the cry "Stand ye" (*i.e.* remain), or even paying any attention to it. *Hiphnâh*, lit. "to turn the back" (*'ōreph*, Jer. xlviii. 39), to flee, but when applied to a

person already fleeing, to turn round (cf. Jer. xlvi. 5). In ver. 9 the conquerors are summoned to plunder, not by their generals, but by God, who speaks through the prophet. The fact is hereby indicated, "that this does not happen by chance, but because God determines to avenge the injuries inflicted upon His people" (Calvin). With וְאֵין קֵצֶה the prophecy passes into a simple description. There is no end *latt'khûnâh*, to the furnishing with treasures. *T'khûnâh*, from *kûn*, not from *tâkhan*, lit. the setting up, the erection of a building (Ezek. xliii. 11); here the furnishing of Nineveh as the dwelling-place of the rulers of the world, whilst in Job xxiii. 3 it is applied to the place where the throne of God has been established. In כָּבֹד the כ might be thought of as still continuing in force (Ewald, Hitzig), but it answers better to the liveliness of the description to take כָּבֹד as beginning a fresh sentence. כָּבֹד written defectively, as in Gen. xxxi. 1: glory, equivalent to the great amount of the wealth, as in Genesis (*l.c.*). *K'lê chemdâh*, gold and silver vessels and jewels, as in Hos. xiii. 15. That there were immense treasures of the precious metals and of costly vessels treasured up in Nineveh, may be inferred with certainty from the accounts of ancient writers, which border on the fabulous.[1] Of all these treasures nothing was left but desolate emptiness. This is expressed by the combination of three synonymous words. *Bûqâh* and *m'bhûqâh* are substantive formations from *bûq* = *bâqaq*, to empty out, and are combined to strengthen the idea, like similar combinations in Zeph. i. 15, Ezek. xxxiii. 29, and Isa. xxix. 2 sqq. *M'bhûllâqâh* is a synonymous noun formed from the participle *pual*, and signifying devastation (cf. Isa. xxiv. 1, where even *bâlaq* is combined with *bâqaq*). In ver. 11*b* the horror of the vanquished at the

[1] For proofs, see Layard's *Nineveh*, ii. 415 sqq., and Movers, *Phönizier* (iii. 1, pp. 40, 41). After quoting the statements of Ctesias, the latter observes that "these numbers are indeed fabulous; but they have their historical side, inasmuch as in the time of Ctesias the riches of Nineveh were estimated at an infinitely greater amount than the enormous treasures accumulated in the treasuries of the Persian empire. That the latter is quite in accordance with truth, may be inferred from the fact that the conquerors of Nineveh, the Medes and Chaldæans, of whose immense booty, in the shape of gold, silver, and other treasures, even the prophet Nahum speaks, furnished Ecbatana and Babylon with gold and silver from the booty of Nineveh to an extent unparalleled in all history."

total devastation of Nineveh is described, also in short substantive clauses: "melted heart" (*nâmēs* is a participle), *i.e.* perfect despondency (see Isa. xiii. 7; Josh. vii. 5); trembling of the knees, so that from terror men can hardly keep upon their feet (*pīq* for *pūq*; it only occurs here). *Chalchâlâh* formed by reduplication from *chīl:* spasmodic pains in all loins, like the labour pains of women in childbirth (cf. Isa. xxi. 3). Lastly, the faces of all turning pale (see at Joel ii. 6).

Vers. 11–13. Thus will the mighty city be destroyed, with its men of war and booty. Ver. 11. "*Where is the dwelling of the lions and the feeding-place of the young lions, where the lion walked, the lioness, the lion's whelp, and no one frightened?* Ver. 12. *The lion robbing for the need of his young ones, and strangling for his lionesses, and he filled his dens with prey, and his dwelling-places with spoil.* Ver. 13. *Behold, I come to thee, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, and I cause her chariots to burn in smoke, and thy young lions the sword devours; and I cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall be heard no more.*" The prophet, beholding the destruction in spirit as having already taken place, looks round for the site on which the mighty city once stood, and sees it no more. This is the meaning of the question in ver. 11. He describes it as the dwelling-place of lions. The point of comparison is the predatory lust of its rulers and their warriors, who crushed the nations like lions, plundering their treasures, and bringing them together in Nineveh. To fill up the picture, the epithets applied to the lions are grouped together according to the difference of sex and age. אַרְיֵה is the full-grown male lion; לָבִיא, the lioness; כְּפִיר, the young lion, though old enough to go in search of prey; גּוּר אַרְיֵה, *catulus leonis*, the lion's whelp, which cannot yet seek prey for itself. וּמִרְעֵה הוּא, lit. "and a feeding-place is it," *sc.* the dwelling-place (הוּא pointing back to מְעוֹן) in this sense: "Where is the dwelling-place which was also a feeding-place for the young lions?" By the apposition the thought is expressed, that the city of lions was not only a resting-place, but also afforded a comfortable living. אֲשֶׁר is to be taken in connection with the following שָׁם: in the very place where; and *hâlakh* signifies simply to walk, to walk about, not "to take exercise," in which case the *kal* would stand for *piel.* The more precise definition follows in וְאֵין מַחֲרִיד, without any one

terrifying, hence in perfect rest and security, and undisturbed might (cf. Mic. iv. 4; Lev. xxvi. 6; Deut. xxviii. 26, etc.). Under the same figure ver. 12 describes the tyranny and predatory lust of the Assyrians in their wars. This description is subordinate in sense to the leading thought, or to the question contained in the previous verse. Where is the city now, into which the Assyrians swept together the booty of the peoples and kingdoms which they had destroyed? In form, however, the verse is attached poetically in loose apposition to ver. 12*b*. The lion, as king of the beasts, is a very fitting emblem of the kings or rulers of Assyria. The lionesses and young lions are the citizens of Nineveh and of the province of Assyria, the tribe-land of the imperial monarchy of Assyria, and not the queens and princes, as the Chaldee explains it. *Gōrōth* with the *o*-inflection for *gūrōth*, as in Jer. li. 38. *Chōrīm*, holes for hiding-places, or caves, not only applies to the robbers, in which character the Assyrians are exhibited through the figure of the lion (Hitzig), but also to the lions, which carry their prey into caves (cf. Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. 737). This destruction of Nineveh will assuredly take place; for Jehovah the Almighty God has proclaimed it, and He will fulfil His word. The word of God in ver. 14 stamps the foregoing threat with the seal of confirmation. הִנְנִי אֵלַיִךְ, behold I (will) to thee (Nineveh). We have not to supply אָבוֹא here, but simply the *verb. copul.*, which is always omitted in such sentences. The relation of the subject to the object is expressed by אֶל (cf. ch. iii. 5; Jer. li. 25). הִבְעַרְתִּי בָעָשָׁן, I burn into smoke, *i.e.* so that it vanishes into smoke (cf. Ps. xxxvii. 20). רִכְבָּהּ, her war-chariots, stands synecdochically for the whole of the apparatus of war (Calvin). The suffix in the third person must not be altered; it may easily be explained from the poetical variation of prophetic announcement and direct address. The young lions are the warriors; the echo of the figure in the previous verse still lingers in this figure, as well as in טַרְפֵּךְ. The last clause expresses the complete destruction of the imperial might of Assyria. The messengers of Nineveh are partly heralds, as the carriers of the king's commands; partly halberdiers, or delegates who fulfilled the ruler's commands (cf. 1 Kings xix. 2; 2 Kings xix. 23). The suffix in מַלְאָכֶיהָ is in a lengthened form, on account of the tone at the end of the section, analogous to אֹתָהּ in Ex. xxix.

35, and is not to be regarded as an Aramæism or a dialectical variation (Ewald, § 258, *a*). The *tsere* of the last syllable is occasioned by the previous *tsere*. Jerome has summed up the meaning very well as follows: "Thou wilt never lay countries waste any more, nor exact tribute, nor will thy messengers be heard throughout thy provinces." (On the last clause, see Ezek. xix. 9.)

NINEVEH'S SINS AND INEVITABLE DESTRUCTION.—CHAP. III.

The announcement of the destruction awaiting Nineveh is confirmed by the proof, that this imperial city has brought this fate upon itself by its sins and crimes (vers. 1–7), and will no more be able to avert it than the Egyptian No-Amon was (vers. 8–13), but that, in spite of all its resources, it will be brought to a terrible end (vers. 14–19).

Vers. 1–7. The city of blood will have the shame, which it has inflicted upon the nations, repaid to it by a terrible massacre. The prophet announces this with the woe which opens the last section of this threatening prophecy. Ver. 1. "*Woe to the city of blood! She all full of deceit and murder; the prey departs not.*" *'Ir dâmīm*, city of drops of blood, *i.e.* of blood shed, or of murders. This predicate is explained in the following clauses: she all full of lying and murder. *Cachash* and *pereq* are asyndeton, and accusatives dependent upon מְלֵאָה. *Cachash*, lying and deceit: this is correctly explained by Abarbanel and Strauss as referring to the fact that "she deceived the nations with vain promises of help and protection." *Pereq*, tearing in pieces for murder,—a figure taken from the lion, which tears its prey in pieces (Ps. vii. 3). לֹא יָמִישׁ, the prey does not depart, never fails. *Mūsh:* in the *hiphil* here, used intransitively, "to depart," as in Ex. xiii. 22, Ps. lv. 12, and not in a transitive sense, "to cause to depart," to let go; for if *'ir* (the city) were the subject, we should have *tâmīsh*.

This threat is explained in vers. 2 sqq., by a description of the manner in which a hostile army enters Nineveh and fills the city with corpses. Ver. 2. "*The cracking of whips, and noise of the rattling of wheels, and the horse in galloping, and chariots*

flying high. Ver. 3. *Riders dashing along, and flame of the sword, and flashing of the lance, and multitude of slain men and mass of dead men, and no end of corpses; they stumble over their corpses.* Ver. 4. *For the multitude of the whoredoms of the harlot, the graceful one, the mistress of witchcrafts, who sells nations with her whoredoms, and families with her witchcrafts.*" Nahum sees in spirit the hostile army bursting upon Nineveh. He hears the noise, *i.e.* the cracking of the whips of the charioteers, and the rattling (*ra'ash*) of the chariot-wheels, sees horses and chariots driving along (*dâhar*, to hunt, cf. Judg. v. 22; *rı̂qqēd*, to jump, applied to the springing up of the chariots as they drive quickly along over a rugged road), dashing riders (*ma'ăleh*, lit. to cause to ascend, *sc.* the horse, *i.e.* to make it prance, by driving the spur into its side to accelerate its speed), flaming swords, and flashing lances. As these words are well adapted to depict the attack, so are those which follow to describe the consequence or effect of the attack. Slain men, fallen men in abundance, and so many corpses, that one cannot help stumbling or falling over them. כֹּבֶד, the heavy multitude. The *chethib* יכשלו is to be read יִכָּשְׁלוּ (*niphal*), in the sense of stumbling, as in ch. ii. 6. The *keri* וְכָשְׁלוּ is unsuitable, as the sentence does not express any progress, but simply exhibits the infinite number of the corpses (Hitzig). נִוֵּיתָם, their (the slain men's) corpses. This happens to the city of sins because of the multitude of its whoredoms. Nineveh is called *Zōnâh*, and its conduct *z'nūnīm*, not because it had fallen away from the living God and pursued idolatry, for there is nothing about idolatry either here or in what follows; nor because of its commercial intercourse, in which case the commerce of Nineveh would appear here under the perfectly new figure of love-making with other nations (Ewald), for commercial intercourse as such is not love-making; but the love-making, with its parallel "witchcrafts" (*k'shâphīm*), denotes "the treacherous friendship and crafty politics with which the coquette in her search for conquests ensnared the smaller states" (Hitzig, after Abarbanel, Calvin, J. H. Michaelis, and others). This policy is called whoring or love-making, "inasmuch as it was that selfishness which wraps itself up in the dress of love, and under the appearance of love seeks simply the gratification of its own lust" (Hengstenberg on the Rev.). The *zōnâh* is described

still more minutely as טוֹבַת חֵן, beautiful with grace. This refers to the splendour and brilliancy of Nineveh, by which this city dazzled and ensnared the nations, like a graceful coquette. *Ba'ălath-k'shâphīm*, devoted to witchcrafts, mistress of them. *K'shâphīm* (witchcrafts) connected with *z'nūnīm*, as in 2 Kings ix. 22, are "the secret wiles, which, like magical arts, do not come to the light in themselves, but only in their effects" (Hitzig). מָכַר, to sell nations, *i.e.* to rob them of liberty and bring them into slavery, to make them tributary, as in Deut. xxxii. 30, Judg. ii. 14, iii. 8, etc. (not = כמר from כבר, to entangle: Hitzig). בְּזִנּוּנֶיהָ, with (not for) their whoredoms. *Mishpâchōth*, families, synonymous with עַמִּים, are smaller peoples or tribes (cf. Jer. xxv. 9; Ezek. xx. 32).

The Lord will plunge Nineveh into shameful misery in consequence. Ver. 5. "*Behold, I come to thee, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts; and uncover thy skirts over thy face, and let nations see thy nakedness, and kingdoms thy shame.* Ver. 6. *And cast horrible things upon thee, and shame thee, and make thee a gazing-stock.* Ver. 7. *And it comes to pass, every one who sees thee will flee before thee, and say, Is Nineveh laid waste? Who will bewail her? whence do I seek comforters for thee?*" Ver. 5*a* as in ch. ii. 13*a*. The punishment of Nineveh will correspond to her conduct. Her coquetry shall be repaid to her by the uncovering of her nakedness before the nations (cf. Jer. xiii. 26; Isa. xlvii. 3; Hos. ii. 5). *Gillâh*, to uncover. *Shūlīm*, *fimbriæ*, the skirts, borders, or lower end of the long sweeping dress (cf. Ex. xxviii. 33, 34; Isa. vi. 1). עַל פָּנַיִךְ, over thy countenance, so that the train when lifted up is drawn over the face. מַעַר, a contraction of מַעֲרֶה, from עָרָה, signifies in 1 Kings vii. 36 an empty space, here nakedness or shame equivalent to עֶרְוָה. This thought is carried out still further in literal terms in vers. 6, 7. *Shiqqutsīm*, objects of abhorrence, is used most frequently of idols; but here it is used in a more general sense for unclean or repulsive things, dirt and filth. Throwing dirt upon any one is a figurative expression for the most ignominious treatment or greatest contempt. *Nibbēl*, to treat contemptuously, not with words, as in Mic. vii. 6, but with deeds, equivalent to insult or abuse (cf. Jer. xiv. 21). To make it בָּרְאִי, the object of sight, *i.e.* to give up to open shame, παραδειγματίζειν (Matt. i. 19). רְאִי, a pausal form of

רְאִי, the seeing, here the spectacle, like *θέατρον* in 1 Cor. iv. 9. This is evident from ver. 7, where רֹאַיִךְ contains a play upon רְאִי. Every one who looks at her will flee from her as an object of disgust. שְׁדֵדָה, a rare form of the *pual* for שְׁדוּדָה (for the fact, compare Jer. xlviii. 20). The last two clauses express the thought that no one will take pity upon the devastated city, because its fate is so well deserved; compare Isa. li. 19, where the same words are used of Jerusalem. Nineveh will not be able to protect herself from destruction even by her great power. The prophet wrests this vain hope away from her by pointing in vers. 8 sqq. to the fall of the mighty Thebes in Egypt.

Vers. 8–10. Nineveh will share the fate of No-Amon.—Ver. 8. "*Art thou better than No-Amon, that sat by rivers, waters round about her, whose bulwark was the sea, her wall of sea?* Ver. 9. *Ethiopians and Egyptians were (her) strong men, there is no end; Phut and Libyans were for thy help.* Ver. 10. *She also has gone to transportation, into captivity; her children were also dashed in pieces at the corners of all roads; upon her nobles they cast the lot, and all her great men were bound in chains.*" הֲתֵיטִבִי for הֲתֵיטַבִי, for the sake of euphony, the imperfect *kal* of יָטַב, to be good, used to denote prosperity in Gen. xii. 13 and xl. 14, is applied here to the prosperous condition of the city, which was rendered strong both by its situation and its resources. נֹא אָמוֹן, *i.e.* probably "dwelling (נֹא contracted from נוֹא, cf. נְאוֹת) of Amon," the sacred name of the celebrated city of *Thebes* in Upper Egypt, called in Egyptian *P-amen*, *i.e.* house of the god *Amun*, who had a celebrated temple there (Herod. i. 182, ii. 42; see Brugsch, *Geogr. Inschr.* i. p. 177). The Greeks called it *Διὸς πόλις*, generally with the predicate *ἡ μεγάλη* (Diod. Sic. i. 45), or from the profane name of the city, which was *Apet* according to Brugsch (possibly a throne, seat, or bank), and with the feminine article prefixed, *Tapet*, or *Tape*, or *Tepe*, *Θήβη*, generally used in the plural *Θῆβαι*. This strong royal city, which was described even by Homer (*Il.* ix. 383) as *ἑκατόμπυλος*, and in which the Pharaohs of the 18th to the 20th dynasties, from Amosis to the last Rameses, resided, and created those works of architecture which were admired by Greeks and Romans, and the remains of which still fill the visitor with

astonishment, was situated on both banks of the river Nile, which was 1500 feet in breadth at that point, and was built upon a broad plain formed by the falling back of the Libyan and Arabian mountain wall, over which there are now scattered nine larger or smaller fellah-villages, including upon the eastern bank Karnak and Luxor, and upon the western Gurnah and Medinet Abu, with their plantations of date-palms, sugar-canes, corn, etc. הַיּשֶׁבֶת בַּיְאֹרִים, who sits there, *i.e.* dwells quietly and securely, on the streams of the Nile. The plural יְאֹרִים refers to the Nile with its canals, which surrounded the city, as we may see from what follows: "water round about her." אֲשֶׁר־חֵיל, not which is a fortress of the sea (Hitzig), but whose bulwark is sea. חֵיל (for חֵילָה) does not mean the fortified place (Hitzig), but the fortification, bulwark, applied primarily to the moats of a fortification, with the wall belonging to it; then, in the broader sense, the defence of a city in distinction from the actual wall (cf. Isa. xxvi. 1; Lam. ii. 8). מַיִם, consisting of sea is its wall, *i.e.* its wall is formed of sea. Great rivers are frequently called *yâm*, sea, in rhetorical and poetical diction: for example, the Euphrates in Isa. xxvii. 1, Jer. li. 36; and the Nile in Isa. xviii. 2, xix. 5, Job xli. 23. The Nile is still called by the Beduins *bahr*, *i.e.* sea, and when it overflows it really resembles a sea. To the natural strength of Thebes there was also added the strength of the warlike nations at her command. *Cush*, *i.e.* Ethiopians in the stricter sense, and *Mitsraim*, Egyptians, the two tribes descended from Ham, according to Gen. x. 6, who formed the Egyptian kingdom before the fall of Thebes, and under the 25th (Ethiopian) dynasty. עָצְמָה, as in Isa. xl. 29, xlvii. 9, for עֹצֶם, strength; it is written without any suffix, which may easily be supplied from the context. The corresponding words to עָצְמָה in the parallel clause are וְאֵין קֵצֶה (with *Vav cop.*): Egyptians, as for them there is no number; equivalent to an innumerable multitude. To these there were to be added the auxiliary tribes: *Put*, *i.e.* the Libyans in the broader sense, who had spread themselves out over the northern part of Africa as far as Mauritania (see at Gen. x. 6); and *Lubim* = *L'hâbhīm*, the Libyans in the narrower sense, probably the *Libyægyptii* of the ancients (see at Gen. x. 13). In בְּעֻזְרָתֵךְ (cf. Ps. xxxv. 2) Nahum addresses No-Amon itself, to give greater life to the description. Notwithstanding all this might,

No-Amon had to wander into captivity. *Laggōlâh* and *basshebhī* are not tautological. *Laggōlâh*, for emigration, is strengthened by *basshebhī* into captivity. The perfect הָלְכָה is obviously not to be taken prophetically. The very antithesis of גַּם־הִיא הָלְכָה and גַּם־אַתְּ תִּשָּׁכְרִי (ver. 11) shows of itself that הָלְכָה refers to the past, as תִּשָּׁכְרִי does to the future; yea, the facts themselves require that Nahum should be understood as pointing to the fate which the powerful city of Thebes had already experienced. For it must be an event that has already occurred, and not something still in the future, which he holds up before Nineveh as a mirror of the fate that is awaiting it. The clauses which follow depict the cruelties that were generally associated with the taking of an enemy's cities. For עֹלֲלֶיהָ וגו׳, see Hos. xiv. 1, Isa. xiii. 16, and 2 Kings viii. 12; and for יְדוּ גוֹרָל, Joel iv. 3 and Ob. 11. *Nikhbaddīm, nobiles;* cf. Isa. xxiii. 8, 9. *Gᵉdōlīm, magnates;* cf. Jonah iii. 7. It must be borne in mind, however, that the words only refer to cruelties connected with the conquest and carrying away of the inhabitants, and not to the destruction of No-Amon.

We have no express historical account of this occurrence; but there is hardly any doubt that, after the conquest of Ashdod, *Sargon* the king of Assyria organized an expedition against Egypt and Ethiopia, conquered No-Amon, the residence of the Pharaohs at that time, and, as Isaiah prophesied (Isa. xx. 3, 4), carried the prisoners of Egypt and Ethiopia into exile. According to the Assyrian researches and their most recent results (*vid.* Spiegel's *Nineveh and Assyria* in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*), the king Sargon mentioned in Isa. xx. 1 is not the same person as Shalmaneser, as I assumed in my commentary on 2 Kings xvii. 3, but his successor, and the predecessor of Sennacherib, who ascended the throne during the siege of Samaria, and conquered that city in the first year of his reign, leading 27,280 persons into captivity, and appointing a vicegerent over the country of the ten tribes. In Assyrian *Sargon* is called *Sar Kin, i.e.* essentially a king. He was the builder of the palace at Khorsabad, which is so rich in monuments; and, according to the inscriptions, he carried on wars in Susiana, Babylon, the borders of Egypt, Melitene, Southern Armenia, Kurdistan, and Media; and in all his expeditions he resorted to the removal of the people in great numbers, as one

means of securing the lasting subjugation of the lands (see Spiegel, *l.c.* p. 224). In the great inscription in the palace-halls of Khorsabad, Sargon boasts immediately after the conquest of Samaria of a victorious conflict with Pharaoh Sebech at Raphia, in consequence of which the latter became tributary, and also of the dethroning of the rebellious king of Ashdod; and still further, that after another king of Ashdod, who had been chosen by the people, had fled to Egypt, he besieged Ashdod with all his army, and took it. Then follows a difficult and mutilated passage, in which Rawlinson (*Five Great Monarchies*, ii. 416) and Oppert (*Les Sargonides*, pp. 22, 26, 27) find an account of the complete subjugation of Sebech (see Delitzsch on Isaiah, vol. i. p. 374). There is apparently a confirmation of this in the monuments recording the deeds of Esarhaddon's successor, whose name is read *Assur-bani-pal*, according to which that king carried on tedious wars in Egypt against Tirhaka, who had conquered Memphis, Thebes, and sundry other Egyptian cities during the illness of Esarhaddon, and according to his own account, succeeded at length in completely overcoming him, and returned home with rich booty, having first of all taken hostages for future good behaviour (see Spiegel, p. 225). If these inscriptions have been read correctly, it follows from them that from the reign of Sargon the Assyrians made attempts to subjugate Egypt, and were partially successful, though they could not maintain their conquests. The struggle between Assyria and Egypt for supremacy in Hither Asia may also be inferred from the brief notices in the Old Testament (2 Kings xvii. 4) concerning the help which the Israelitish king Hosea expected from So the king of Egypt, and also concerning the advance of Tirhaka against Sennacherib.[1]

Vers. 11–13. The same, or rather a worse fate than No-

[1] From the modern researches concerning ancient Egypt, not the smallest light can be obtained as to any of these things. "The Egyptologists (as J. Bumüller observes, p. 245) have hitherto failed to fill up the gaps in the history of Egypt, and have been still less successful in restoring the chronology; for hitherto we have not met with a single well-established date, which we have obtained from a monumental inscription; nor have the monuments enabled us to assign to a single Pharaoh, from the 1st to the 21st, his proper place in the years or centuries of the historical chronology."

Amon suffered, is now awaiting Nineveh. Ver. 11. "*Thou also wilt be drunken, shalt be hidden; thou also wilt seek for a refuge from the enemy.* Ver. 12. *All thy citadels are fig-trees with early figs; if they are shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.* Ver. 13. *Behold thy people, women in the midst of thee; the gates of thy land are thrown quite open to thine enemies; fire consumes thy bolts.*" גַּם־אַתְּ corresponds to גַּם־הִיא in ver. 10: as she, so also thou. "The fate of No-Amon is a prophecy of thine own" (Hitzig). תִּשְׁכְּרִי, thou wilt be drunken, viz. from the goblet of divine wrath, as at Ob. 16. תִּהְיִי נֶעְלָמָה might mean, "thou wilt be hiding thyself;" but although this might suit what follows, it does not agree with תִּשְׁכְּרִי, since an intoxicated person is not in the habit of hiding himself. Moreover, נֶעְלָם always means "hidden," *occultus;* so that Calvin's interpretation is the correct one: "Thou wilt vanish away as if thou hadst never been; the Hebrews frequently using the expression being hidden for being reduced to nothing." This is favoured by a comparison both with ch. i. 8 and ii. 12, and also with the parallel passage in Ob. 16, "They will drink, and be as if they had not been." This is carried out still further in what follows: "Thou wilt seek refuge from the enemy," *i.e.* in this connection, seek it in vain, or without finding it; not, "Thou wilt surely demand salvation from the enemy by surrender" (Strauss), for מֵאוֹיֵב does not belong to תְּבַקְשִׁי, but to מָעוֹז (cf. Isa. xxv. 4). All the fortifications of Nineveh are like fig-trees with early figs (עִם in the sense of subordination, as in Song of Sol. iv. 13), which fall into the mouth of the eater when the trees are shaken. The *tertium compar.* is the facility with which the castles will be taken and destroyed by the enemy assaulting them (cf. Isa. xxviii. 4). We must not extend the comparison so far, however, as to take the figs as representing cowardly warriors, as Hitzig does. Even in ver. 13*a*, where the people are compared to women, the point of comparison is not the cowardliness of the warriors, but the weakness and inability to offer any successful resistance into which the nation of the Assyrians, which was at other times so warlike, would be reduced through the force of the divine judgment inflicted upon Nineveh (compare Isa. xix. 16; Jer. l. 37, li. 30). לְאֹיְבַיִךְ belongs to what follows, and is placed first, and pointed with *zakeph-katon* for the sake of emphasis. The gates of the land

are the approaches to it, the passes leading into it, which were no doubt provided with castles. Tuch (p. 35) refers to the mountains on the north, which Pliny calls impassable. The bolts of these gates are the castles, through which the approaches were closed. Jeremiah transfers to Babel what is here said of Nineveh (see Jer. li. 30).

Vers. 14–19. In conclusion, the prophet takes away from the city so heavily laden with guilt the last prop to its hope,—namely, reliance upon its fortifications, and the numerical strength of its population.—Ver. 14. "*Draw thyself water for the siege! Make thy castles strong! tread in the mire, and stamp in the clay! prepare the brick-kiln!* Ver. 15. *There will the fire devour thee, the sword destroy thee, devour thee like the lickers. Be in great multitude like the lickers, be in great multitude like the locusts?* Ver. 16. *Thou hast made thy merchants more than the stars of heaven; the licker enters to plunder, and flies away.* Ver. 17. *Thy levied ones are like the locusts, and thy men like an army of grasshoppers which encamp in the hedges in the day of frost; if the sun rises, they are off, and men know not their place: where are they?*" Water of the siege is the drinking water necessary for a long-continued siege. Nineveh is to provide itself with this, because the siege will last a long while. It is also to improve the fortifications (*chizzēq* as in 2 Kings xii. 8, 13). This is then depicted still more fully. *Tīt* and *chōmer* are used synonymously here, as in Isa. xli. 25. *Tīt*, lit. dirt, slime, then clay and potter's clay (Isa. *l.c.*). *Chōmer*, clay or mortar (Gen. xi. 3), also dirt of the streets (Isa. x. 6, compared with Mic. vii. 10). הַחֲזֵק, to make firm, or strong, applied to the restoration of buildings in Neh. v. 16 and Ezek. xxvii. 9, 27; here to restore, or to put in order, the brick-kiln (*malbēn*, a denom. from *l'bhēnâh*, a brick), for the purpose of burning bricks. The Assyrians built with bricks sometimes burnt, sometimes unburnt, and merely dried in the sun. Both kinds are met with on the Assyrian monuments (see Layard, vol. ii. p. 36 sqq.). This appeal, however, is simply a rhetorical turn for the thought that a severe and tedious siege is awaiting Nineveh. This siege will end in the destruction of the great and populous city. שָׁם, there, *sc.* in these fortifications of thine, will fire consume thee; fire will destroy the city with its buildings, and the sword destroy the inhabitants. The

destruction of Nineveh by fire is related by ancient writers (Herod. i. 106, 185; Diod. Sic. ii. 25–28; Athen. xii. p. 529), and also confirmed by the ruins (cf. Str. *ad h. l.*). It devours thee like the locust. The subject is not fire *or* sword, either one or the other, but rather both embraced in one. כַּיֶּלֶק, like the *licker; yeleq*, a poetical epithet applied to the locust (see at Joel i. 4), is the nominative, not the accusative, as Calvin, Grotius, Ewald, and Hitzig suppose. For the locusts are not devoured by the fire or the sword, but it is they who devour the vegetables and green of the fields, so that they are everywhere used as a symbol of devastation and destruction. It is true that in the following sentences the locusts are used figuratively for the Assyrians, or the inhabitants of Nineveh; but it is also by no means a rare thing for prophets to give a new turn and application to a figure or simile. The thought is this: fire and sword will devour Nineveh and its inhabitants like the all-consuming locusts, even though the city itself, with its mass of houses and people, should resemble an enormous swarm of locusts. הִתְכַּבֵּד may be either an inf. abs. used instead of the imperative, or the imperative itself. The latter seems the more simple; and the use of the masculine may be explained on the assumption that the prophet had the people floating before his mind, whereas in הִתְכַּבְּדִי he was thinking of the city. *Hithkabbēd*, to show itself heavy by virtue of the large multitude; similar to כָּבֵד in ch. ii. 10 (cf. כָּבֵד in Gen. xiii. 2, Ex. viii. 20, etc.). The comparison to a swarm of locusts is carried still further in vers. 16 and 17, and that so that ver. 16 explains the תֹּאכְלֵךְ כַּיֶּלֶק in ver. 15. Nineveh has multiplied its traders or merchants, even more than the stars of heaven, *i.e.* to an innumerable multitude. The *yeleq*, *i.e.* the army of the enemy, bursts in and plunders. That Nineveh was a very rich commercial city may be inferred from its position,—namely, just at the point where, according to oriental notions, the east and west meet together, and where the Tigris becomes navigable, so that it was very easy to sail from thence into the Persian Gulf; just as afterwards Mosul, which was situated opposite, became great and powerful through its widely-extended trade (see Tuch, *l.c.* p. 31 sqq., and Strauss, *in loc.*).[1] The meaning of

[1] "The point," says O. Strauss (*Nineveh and the Word of God*, Berl. 1855, p. 19), "at which Nineveh was situated was certainly the culmi-

this verse has been differently interpreted, according to the explanation given to the verb *pâshat*. Many, following the ὥρμησε and *expansus est* of the LXX. and Jerome, give it the meaning, to spread out the wing; whilst Credner (on *Joel*, p. 295), Maurer, Ewald, and Hitzig take it in the sense of undressing one's self, and understand it as relating to the shedding of the horny wing-sheaths of the young locusts. But neither the one nor the other of these explanations can be grammatically sustained. *Pâshat* never means anything else than to plunder, or to invade with plundering; not even in such passages as Hos. vii. 1, 1 Chron. xiv. 9 and 13, which Gesenius and Dietrich quote in support of the meaning, to spread; and the meaning forced upon it by Credner, of the shedding of the wing-sheaths by locusts, is perfectly visionary, and has merely been invented by him for the purpose of establishing his false interpretation of the different names given to the locusts in Joel i. 4.. In the passage before us we cannot understand by the *yeleq*, which "plunders and flies away" (*pâshat vayyâ'ōph*), the innumerable multitude of the merchants of Nineveh, because they were not able to fly away in crowds out of the besieged city. Moreover, the flying away of the merchants would be quite contrary to the meaning of the whole description, which does not promise deliverance from danger by flight, but threatens destruction. The *yeleq* is rather the innumerable army of the enemy, which plunders everything, and hurries away with its booty. In ver. 17 the last two clauses of ver. 15 are explained, and the warriors of Nineveh compared to an army of locusts. There is some difficulty caused by the two words מְנֻזָּרֶיךָ and טַפְסְרֶיךָ, the first of which only occurs here, and the second only once more, viz. in Jer. li. 27, where we meet with it in the singular. That they both denote warlike companies appears to be tolerably certain; but the real meaning cannot be exactly determined. מְנֻזָּרִים with *dagesh dir.*, as for example in מְקֻדָּשׁ in Ex. xv. 17, is probably derived from *nâzar*, to separate, and not directly from *nezer*, a diadem, or *nâzīr*, the crowned person, from which the lexicons, following

nating point of the three quarters of the globe—Europe, Asia, and Africa; and from the very earliest times it was just at the crossing of the Tigris by Nineveh that the great military and commercial roads met, which led into the heart of all the leading known lands."

Kimchi's example, have derived the meaning princes, or persons ornamented with crowns; whereas the true meaning is those levied, selected (for war), analogous to *bâchūr*, the picked or selected one, applied to the soldiery. The meaning princes or captains is at variance with the comparison to *'arbeh*, the multitude of locusts, since the number of the commanders in an army, or of the war-staff, is always a comparatively small one. And the same objection may be offered to the rendering war-chiefs or captains, which has been given to *taphsar*, and which derives only an extremely weak support from the Neo-Persian تاوسر, although the word might be applied to a commander-in-chief in Jer. li. 27, and does signify an angel in the Targum-Jonathan on Deut. xxviii. 12. The different derivations are all untenable (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 554); and the attempt of Böttcher (*N. Krit. Æhrenl.* ii. pp. 209–10) to trace it to the Aramæan verb טפס, *obedivit*, with the inflection ־ר for ־ן, in the sense of *clientes*, vassals, is precluded by the fact that *ar* does not occur as a syllable of inflection. The word is probably Assyrian, and a technical term for soldiers of a special kind, though hitherto it has not been explained. גֹּבַי גֹּבַי, locusts upon locusts, *i.e.* an innumerable swarm of locusts. On גֹּבַי, see at Amos vii. 1; and on the repetition of the same word to express the idea of the superlative, see the comm. on 2 Kings xix. 23 (and Ges. § 108, 4). *Yōm qârâh*, day (or time) of cold, is either the night, which is generally very cold in the East, or the winter-time. To the latter explanation it may be objected, that locusts do not take refuge in walls or hedges during the winter; whilst the expression *yōm*, *day*, for night, may be pleaded against the former. We must therefore take the word as relating to certain cold days, on which the sky is covered with clouds, so that the sun cannot break through, and *zârach* as denoting not the rising of the sun, but its shining or breaking through. The wings of locusts become stiffened in the cold; but as soon as the warm rays of the sun break through the clouds, they recover their animation and fly away. *Nōdad* (*poal*), has flown away, viz. the Assyrian army, which is compared to a swarm of locusts, so that its place is known no more (cf. Ps. ciii. 16), *i.e.* has perished without leaving a trace behind. אֵינָם contracted from אַיֵּהוּ הֵם. These words depict in

the most striking manner the complete annihilation of the army on which Nineveh relied.

Such an end will come to the Assyrian kingdom on the overthrow of Nineveh. Ver. 18. "*Thy shepherds have fallen asleep, king Asshur: thy glorious ones are lying there: thy people have scattered themselves upon the mountains, and no one gathers them.* Ver. 19. *No alleviation to thy fracture, thy stroke is grievous: all who hear tidings of thee clap the hand over thee: for over whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?*" The king of Asshur addressed in ver. 18 is not the last historical king of that kingdom, but a rhetorical personification of the holder of the imperial power of Assyria. His shepherds and glorious ones (*'addīrīm*, as in ch. ii. 6) are the princes and great men, upon whom the government and defence of the kingdom devolved, the royal counsellors, deputies, and generals. *Nâmū*, from *nūm*, to slumber, to sleep, is not a figurative expression for carelessness and inactivity here; for the thought that the people would be scattered, and the kingdom perish, through the carelessness of the rulers (Hitzig), neither suits the context, where the destruction of the army and the laying of the capital in ashes are predicted, nor the object of the whole prophecy, which does not threaten the fall of the kingdom through the carelessness of its rulers, but the destruction of the kingdom by a hostile army. *Nūm* denotes here, as in Ps. lxxvi. 6, the sleep of death (cf. Ps. xiii. 4; Jer. li. 39, 57: Theodoret, Hesselb., Str., and others). *Shâkhan*, a synonym of *shâkhabh*, to have lain down, to lie quietly (Judg. v. 17), used here of the rest of death. As the shepherds have fallen asleep, the flock (*i.e.* the Assyrian people) is scattered upon the mountains and perishes, because no one gathers it together. Being scattered upon the mountains, is easily explained from the figure of the flock (cf. Num. xxvii. 17; 1 Kings xxii. 17; Zech. xiii. 7), and implies destruction. The mountains are mentioned with evident reference to the fact that Nineveh is shut in towards the north by impassable mountains. *Kēhâh*, a noun formed from the adjective, the extinction of the wound (cf. Lev. xiii. 6), *i.e.* the softening or anointing of it. *Shebher*, the fracture of a limb, is frequently applied to the collapse or destruction of a state or kingdom (*e.g.* Ps. lx. 4; Lam. ii. 11). נַחְלָה מַכָּתֶךָ, *i.e.* dangerously bad, incurable is the stroke which

has fallen upon thee (cf. Jer. x. 19, xiv. 17, xxx. 12). Over thy destruction will all rejoice who hear thereof. שִׁמְעֲךָ, the tidings of thee, *i.e.* of that which has befallen thee. Clapping the hands is a gesture expressive of joy (cf. Ps. xlvii. 2; Isa. lv. 12). *All:* because they all had to suffer from the malice of Asshur. רָעָה, malice, is the tyranny and cruelty which Assyria displayed towards the subjugated lands and nations.

Thus was Nineveh to perish. If we inquire now how the prophecy was fulfilled, the view already expressed by Josephus (*Ant.* x. 2), that the fall of the Assyrian empire commenced with the overthrow of Sennacherib in Judah, is not confirmed by the results of the more recent examinations of the Assyrian monuments. For according to the inscriptions, so far as they have been correctly deciphered, Sennacherib carried out several more campaigns in Susiana and Babylonia after that disaster, whilst ancient writers also speak of an expedition of his to Cilicia. His successor, Esarhaddon, also carried on wars against the cities of Phœnicia, against Armenia and Cilicia, attacked the Edomites, and transported some of them to Assyria, and is said to have brought a small and otherwise unknown people, the *Bikni*, into subjection; whilst we also know from the Old Testament (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11) that his generals led king Manasseh in chains to Babylon. Like many of his predecessors, he built himself a palace at Kalah or Nimrûd; but before the internal decorations were completely finished, it was destroyed by so fierce a fire, that the few monuments preserved have suffered very considerably. His successor is the last king of whom we have any inscriptions, with his name still legible upon them (viz. *Assur-bani-pal*). He carried on wars not only in Susiana, but also in Egypt, viz. against Tirhaka, who had conquered Memphis, Thebes, and other Egyptian cities, during the illness of Esarhaddon; also on the coast of Syria, and in Cilicia and Arabia; and completed different buildings which bear his name, including a palace in Kouyunjik, in which a room has been found with a library in it, consisting of clay tablets. Assur-bani-pal had a son, whose name was written *Asur-emid-ilin*, and who is regarded as the *Sarakos* of the ancients, under whom the Assyrian empire perished, with the conquest and destruction of Nineveh (see Spiegel in Herzog's *Cycl.*). But if, according to these testimonies, the might of the

Assyrian empire was not so weakened by Sennacherib's overthrow in Judah, that any hope could be drawn from that, according to human conjecture, of the speedy destruction of that empire; the prophecy of Nahum concerning Nineveh, which was uttered in consequence of that catastrophe, cannot be taken as the production of any human combination: still less can it be taken, as Ewald supposes, as referring to "the first important siege of Nineveh, under the Median king Phraortes (Herod. i. 102)." For Herodotus says nothing about any siege of Nineveh, but simply speaks of a war between Phraortes and the Assyrians, in which the former lost his life. Nineveh was not really besieged till the time of Cyaxares (Uwakhshatra), who carried on the war with an increased army, to avenge the death of his father, and forced his way to Nineveh, to destroy that city, but was compelled, by the invasion of his own land by the Scythians, to relinquish the siege, and hasten to meet that foe (Her. i. 103). On the extension of his sway, the same Cyaxares commenced a war with the Lydian king Alyattes, which was carried on for five years with alternating success and failure on both sides, and was terminated in the sixth year by the fact, that when the two armies were standing opposite to one another, drawn up in battle array, the day suddenly darkened into night, which alarmed the armies, and rendered the kings disposed for peace. This was brought about by the mediation of the Cilician viceroy Syennesis and the Babylonian viceroy Labynetus, and sealed by the establishment of a marriage relationship between the royal families of Lydia and Media (Her. i. 74). And if this Labynetus was the same person as the Babylonian king *Nabopolassar*, which there is no reason to doubt, it was not till after the conclusion of this peace that Cyaxares formed an alliance with Nabopolassar to make war upon Nineveh; and this alliance was strengthened by his giving his daughter Amuhea in marriage to Nabopolassar's son Nebuchadnezzar (Nabukudrossor). The combined forces of these two kings now advanced to the attack upon Nineveh, and conquered it, after a siege of three years, the Assyrian king *Saracus* burning himself in his palace as the besiegers were entering the city. This is the historical kernel of the capture and destruction of Nineveh, which may be taken as undoubted fact from the accounts of Herodotus (i. 106) and

Diod. Sic. (ii. 24–28), as compared with the extract from Abydenus in Euseb. *Chron. Armen.* i. p. 54; whereas it is impossible to separate the historical portions from the legendary and in part mythical decorations contained in the elaborate account given by Diodorus (*vid.* M. v. Niebuhr, *Geschichte Assurs*, p. 200 sqq.; Duncker, *Geschichte des Alterthums.* i. p. 793 sqq.; and Bumüller, *Gesch. d. Alterth.* i. p. 316 sqq.).

The year of the conquest and destruction of Nineveh has been greatly disputed, and cannot be exactly determined. As it is certain that Nabopolassar took part in the war against Nineveh, and this is indirectly intimated even by Herodotus, who attributes the conquest of it to Cyaxares and the Medes (*vid.* i. 106), Nineveh must have fallen between the years 625 and 606 B.C. For according to the canon of Ptolemy, Nabopolassar was king of Babylon from 625 to 606; and this date is astronomically established by an eclipse of the moon, which took place in the fifth year of his reign, and which actually occurred in the year 621 B.C. (*vid.* Niebuhr, p. 47). Attempts have been made to determine the year of the taking of Nineveh, partly with reference to the termination of the Lydio-Median war, and partly from the account given by Herodotus of the twenty-eight years' duration of the Scythian rule in Asia. Starting from the fact, that the eclipse of the sun, which put an end to the war between Cyaxares and Alyattes, took place, according to the calculation of Altmann, on the 30th September B.C. 610 (see Ideler, *Handbuch der Chronologie*, i. p. 209 sqq.), M. v. Niebuhr (pp. 197–8) has assumed that, at the same time as the mediation of peace between the Lydians and Medes, an alliance was formed between Cyaxares and Nabopolassar for the destruction of Nineveh; and as this treaty could not possibly be kept secret, the war against Assyria was commenced at once, according to agreement, with their united forces. But as it was impossible to carry out extensive operations in winter, the siege of Nineveh may not have commenced till the spring of 609; and as it lasted three years according to Ctesias, the capture may not have been effected before the spring of 606 B.C. It is true that this combination is apparently confirmed by the fact, that during that time the Egyptian king Necho forced his way into Palestine and Syria, and after subduing all Syria, advanced to the Euphrates; since this advance of the Egyptian

is most easily explained on the supposition that Nabopolassar was so occupied with the war against Nineveh, that he could not offer any resistance to the enterprise of Necho. And the statement in 2 Kings xxiii. 29, that Necho had come up to fight against the king of Asshur on the Euphrates, appears to favour the conclusion, that at that time (*i.e.* in the year of Josiah's death, 610 B.C.) the Assyrian empire was not yet destroyed. Nevertheless there are serious objections to this combination. In the first place, there is the double difficulty, that Cyaxares would hardly have been in condition to undertake the war against Nineveh in alliance with Nabopolassar, directly after the conclusion of peace with Alyattes, especially after he had carried on a war for five years, without being able to defeat his enemy; and secondly, that even Nabopolassar, after a fierce three years' conflict with Nineveh, the conquest of which was only effected in consequence of the wall of the city having been thrown down for the length of twenty stadia, would hardly possess the power to take the field at once against Pharaoh Necho, who had advanced as far as the Euphrates, and not only defeat him at Carchemish, but pursue him to the frontier of Egypt, and wrest from him all the conquests that he had effected, as would necessarily be the case, since the battle at Carchemish was fought in the year 606; and the pursuit of the defeated foe by Nebuchadnezzar, to whom his father had transferred the command of the army because of his own age and infirmity, even to the very border of Egypt, is so distinctly attested by the biblical accounts (2 Kings xxiv. 1 and 7; Jer. xlvi. 2), and by the testimony of Berosus in Josephus (*Ant.* x. 11, 1, and *c. Ap.* i. 19), that these occurrences are placed beyond the reach of doubt (see comm. on 2 Kings xxiv. 1). These difficulties would not indeed be sufficient in themselves to overthrow the combination mentioned, provided that the year 610 could be fixed upon with certainty as the time when the Lydio-Median war was brought to a close. But that is not the case; and this circumstance is decisive. The eclipse of the sun, which alarmed Cyaxares and Alyattes, and made them disposed for peace, must have been total, or nearly total, in Central Asia and Cappadocia, to produce the effect described. But it has been proved by exact astronomical calculations, that on the 30th September 610 B.C., the shadow of the moon did not

fall upon those portions of Asia Minor, whereas it did so on the 18th May 622, after eight o'clock in the morning, and on the 28th May 585 (*vid.* Bumüll. p. 315, and M. v. Niebuhr, pp. 48, 49). Of these two dates the latter cannot come into consideration at all, because Cyaxares only reigned till the year 594; and therefore, provided that peace had not been concluded with Alyattes before 595, he would not have been able to carry on the war with Nineveh and conquer that city. On the other hand, there is no valid objection that can be offered to our transferring the conclusion of peace with the Lydian king to the year 622 B.C. Since, for example, Cyaxares became king as early as the year 634, he might commence the war with the Lydians as early as the year 627 or 628; and inasmuch as Nabopolassar was king of Babylon from 625 to 605, he might very well help to bring about the peace between Cyaxares and Alyattes in the year 622. In this way we obtain the whole space between 622 and 605 B.C. for the war with Nineveh; so that the city may have been taken and destroyed as early as the years 615–610.

Even the twenty-eight years' duration of the Scythian supremacy in Asia, which is recorded by Herodotus (i. 104, 106, cf. iv. 1), cannot be adduced as a well-founded objection. For if the Scythians invaded Media in the year 633, so as to compel Cyaxares to relinquish the siege of Nineveh, and if their rule in Upper Asia lasted for twenty-eight years, the expedition against Nineveh, which led to the fall of that city, cannot have taken place after the expulsion of the Scythians in the year 605, because the Assyrian empire had passed into the hands of the Chaldæans before that time, and Nebuchadnezzar had already defeated Necho on the Euphrates, and was standing at the frontier of Egypt, when he received the intelligence of his father's death, which led him to return with all speed to Babylon. There is no other alternative left, therefore, than either to assume, as M. v. Niebuhr does (pp. 119, 120), that the war of Cyaxares with the Lydians, and also the last war against Nineveh, and probably also the capture of Nineveh, and the greatest portion of the Median conquests between Ararat and Halys, fell within the peri[redacted]he Scythian sway, so that Cyaxares extended his po[redacted]vassal of the Scythian Great Khan as soon as he had recovered from the

first blow received from these wild hordes, inasmuch as that sovereign allowed his dependent to do just as he liked, provided that he paid the tribute, and did not disturb the hordes in their pasture grounds; or else to suppose that Cyaxares drove out the Scythian hordes from Media at a much earlier period, and liberated his own country from their sway; in which case the twenty-eight years of Herodotus would not indicate the period of their sway over Media and Upper Asia, but simply the length of time that they remained in Hither Asia generally, or the period that intervened between their first invasion and the complete disappearance of their hordes. If Cyaxares had driven the Scythians out of his own land at a much earlier period, he might extend his dominion even while they still kept their position in Hither Asia, and might commence the war with the Lydians as early as the year 628 or 627, especially as his wrath is said to have been kindled because Alyattes refused to deliver up to him a Scythian horde, which had first of all submitted to Cyaxares, and then fled into Lydia to Alyattes (Herod. i. 73). Now, whichever of these two combinations be the correct one, they both show that the period of the war commenced by Cyaxares against Nineveh, in alliance with Nabopolassar, cannot be determined by the statement made by Herodotus with regard to the twenty-eight years of the Scythian rule in Asia; and this Scythian rule, generally, does not compel us to place the taking and destruction of Nineveh, and the dissolution of the Assyrian empire, as late as the year 605 B.C., or even later.

At this conquest Nineveh was so utterly destroyed, that, as Strabo (xvi. 1, § 3) attests, the city entirely disappeared immediately after the dissolution of the Assyrian kingdom (*ἡ μὲν οὖν Νῖνος πόλις ἠφανίσθη παραχρῆμα μετὰ τὴν τῶν Σύρων κατάλυσιν*). When Xenophon entered the plain of Nineveh, in the year 401, on the retreat of the ten thousand Greeks, he found the ruins of two large cities, which he calls Larissa and Mespila, and by the side of the first a stone pyramid of 200 feet in height and 100 feet in breadth, upon which many of the inhabitants of the nearest villages had taken refuge, and heard from the inhabitants that it was only by a miracle that it had been possible for the Persians to conquer those cities with their strong walls (Xenoph. *Anab.* iii. 4, 7 sqq.). These

ruined cities had been portions of the ancient Nineveh: Larissa was *Calah;* and Mespila, *Kouyunjik.* Thus Xenophon passed by the walls of Nineveh without even learning its name. Four hundred years after (according to Tacitus, *Annal.* xii. 13), a small fortress stood on this very spot, to guard the crossing of the Tigris; and the same fortress is mentioned by *Abul-Pharaj* in the thirteenth century (*Hist. Dynast.* pp. 266, 289, 353). Opposite to this, on the western side of the Tigris, Mosul had risen into one of the first cities of Asia, and the ruins of Nineveh served as quarries for the building of the new city, so that nothing remained but heaps of rubbish, which even Niebuhr took to be natural heights in the year 1766, when he was told, as he stood by the Tigris bridge, that he was in the neighbourhood of ancient Nineveh. So completely had this mighty city vanished from the face of the earth; until, in the most recent times, viz. from 1842 onwards, Botta the French consul, and the two Englishmen Layard and Rawlinson, instituted excavations in the heaps, and brought to light numerous remains of the palaces and state-buildings of the Assyrian rulers of the world. Compare the general survey of these researches, and their results, in Herm. J. C. Weisgenborn's *Ninive u. sein Gebiet.,* Erfurt 1851, and 56, 4.

But if Nahum's prophecy was thus fulfilled in the destruction of Nineveh, even to the disappearance of every trace of its existence, we must not restrict it to this one historical event, but must bear in mind that, as the prophet simply saw in Nineveh the representative for the time of the power of the world in its hostility to God, so the destruction predicted to Nineveh applied to all the kingdoms of the world which have risen up against God since the destruction of Asshur, and which will still continue to do so to the end of the world.

HABAKKUK.

INTRODUCTION.

1. PERSON OF THE PROPHET.—Nothing certain is known as to the circumstances of Habakkuk's life. The name חֲבַקּוּק, formed from חָבַק, to fold the hands, *piel* to embrace, by a repetition of the last radical with the vowel *u*, like נַעֲצוּץ from נָעַץ, שַׁעֲרוּרָה from שַׁעַר, etc., and a reduplication of the penultimate (cf. Ewald, § 157, *a*), signifies embracing; and as the name of a person, either one who embraces, or one who is embraced. Luther took the name in the first sense. "Habakkuk," he says, "signifies an embracer, or one who embraces another, or takes him to his arms," and interpreted it thus in a clever although not perfectly appropriate manner: "He embraces his people, and takes them to his arms, *i.e.* he comforts them and holds (lifts) them up, as one embraces a weeping child or person, to quiet it with the assurance that if God will it shall be better soon." The LXX. wrote the name *Ἀμβακούμ*, taking the word as pronounced חַבָּקּוּק, and compensating for the doubling of the ב by the liquid *μ*, and changing the closing ק into *μ*. Jerome in his translation writes the name *Habacuc*. In the headings to his book (ch. i. 1 and iii. 1) Habakkuk is simply described by the epithet הַנָּבִיא, as a man who held the office of a prophet. From the conclusion to the psalm in ch. iii., "To the leader in the accompaniment to my playing upon stringed instruments" (ver. 19), we learn that he was officially qualified to take part in the liturgical singing of the temple, and therefore belonged to one of the Levitical families, who were charged with the maintenance of the temple music, and, like the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel, who sprang from priestly households, belonged to the tribe of Levi. This is supported by the superscription of the apocryphon of Bel and the dragon at

Babel, ἐκ προφητείας Ἀμβακοὺμ υἱοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Λευί, which has been preserved in the Cod. Chisian. of the LXX. from Origen's tetrapla, and has passed into the Syro-hexaplar. version; even if this statement should not be founded upon tradition, but simply inferred from the subscription to ch. iii. 19. For even in that case it would prove that בִּנְגִינוֹתַי was understood in ancient times as signifying that the prophet took part in the liturgical singing of the temple.[1] On the other hand, the rest of the legends relating to our prophet are quite worthless: viz. the circumstantial account in the apocryphal book of Bel and the Dragon of the miraculous way in which Habakkuk was transported to Daniel, who had been cast into the lions' den, which is also found in a MS. of the Midrash *Bereshit rabba;* and also the statements contained in the writings of Ps. Doroth. and Ps. Epiph. *de vitis prophet.*, that Habakkuk sprang from the tribe of Simeon; that he was born at *Βηθ-ζοχήρ* (*Sozomenus*, *Χαφὰρ Ζαχαρία*, the talmudic כְּפַר דִּכְרִין), a hamlet to the north of Lydda, near to Maresha on the mountains; that when Nebuchadnezzar came to Jerusalem, he fled to *Ostrakine* (on the promontory now called *Ras Straki*, situated in the neighbourhood of Arabia Petræa); and that he died on his native soil two years after the return of the people from Babylon, and was buried at the spot between Keila and Gabatha, where his grave was still shown in the time of Eusebius and Jerome (cf. *Onomast.* ed. Lars. et Parthey, pp. 128-9).

[1] There is not much probability in this conjecture, however, since the LXX. have not understood the subscription in this sense, but have rendered it incorrectly τοῦ νικῆσαι ἐν τῇ ᾠδῇ αὐτοῦ, which has led the fathers to take the words as belonging to the psalm itself, and to understand it as relating to the songs of praise which the church would raise to God for the deliverance which it had received. Theod. Mops. explains it in this way: "He sets us higher than all the rest, so that nothing else becomes us than to continue in the songs and hymns which are due to God, because, against all human hope, He has given us the victory over our enemies." Cyril of Alex. and Theodoret give similar explanations. Even Jerome, in his rendering "*et super excelsa mea deducet me victori in psalmis canentem*," connects the words with the preceding sentence, and interprets them as referring to the songs of praise which "every righteous man who is worthy of the election of God" will raise at the end of the world to the great conqueror "Jesus, who was the first to conquer in the fight." With such an explanation of the words as these, it was impossible to see any intimation of the Levitical descent of the prophet in the expression בִּנְגִינוֹתַי.

For further particulars as to the apocryphal legends, see Delitzsch, *De Habacuci proph. vita atque ætate commentat.*, ed. ii., Lps. 1842.

These legends do not even help us to fix the date of Habakkuk's life. All that can be gathered with any certainty from his own writings is that he prophesied before the arrival of the Chaldæans in Palestine, *i.e.* before the victory gained by Nebuchadnezzar over Pharaoh Necho at Carchemish in the fourth year of Jehoiakim (Jer. xlvi. 2), since he announces the bringing up of this people to execute judgment upon Judah as something still in the future (ch. i. 5 sqq.). Opinions are divided as to the precise date at which he lived. Leaving out of sight the opinions of those who deny the supernatural character of prophecy, and therefore maintain that the prophet did not prophesy till the Chaldæans were coming against Jerusalem after the defeat of Necho, or had already arrived there, the only question that can arise is, whether Habakkuk lived and laboured in the reign of Josiah or in the closing years of Manasseh. Many have found a decisive proof that he lived in the reign of Josiah in ch. i. 5, viz. in the fact that the prophet there foretels the Chaldæan judgment as a work which God will perform during the lifetime of the persons to whom his words are addressed ("in your days"); and they have inferred from this that we must not at any rate go beyond Josiah's reign, because the prophet is not speaking to the children, but to the adults, *i.e.* to those who have reached the age of manhood. But the measure of time by which to interpret בִּימֵיכֶם cannot be obtained either from Joel i. 2, where the days of the persons addressed are distinguished from the days of the fathers and grandchildren, or from Jer. xvi. 9 and Ezek. xii. 25; but this expression is quite a relative one, especially in prophetic addresses, and may embrace either a few years only, or a complete lifetime, and even more. Now, as there were only thirty-eight years between the death of Manasseh and the first invasion of the Chaldæans, the Chaldæan judgment might very well be announced during the last years of that king to the then existing generation as one that would happen in their days. We are precluded from placing the announcement in the time immediately preceding the appearance of the Chaldæans in Hither Asia, say in the first years of Jehoiakim or the closing

years of Josiah's reign, by the fact that Habakkuk represents this work of God as an incredible one: "Ye would not believe it, if it were told you" (ch. i. 5). Moreover, it is expressly related in 2 Kings xxi. 10–16 and 2 Chron. xxxiii. 10, that in the time of Manasseh Jehovah caused His prophets to announce the coming of such a calamity, "that both ears of all who heard it would tingle"—namely, the destruction of Jerusalem and rejection of Judah. In all probability, one of these prophets was Habakkuk, who was the first of all the prophets known to us to announce this horrible judgment. Zephaniah and Jeremiah both appeared with the announcement of the same judgment in the reign of Josiah, and both took notice of Habakkuk in their threatenings. Thus Zephaniah quite as certainly borrowed the words הַס מִפְּנֵי אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה in ch. i. 7 from Hab. ii. 20, as Zechariah did the words הַס כָּל־בָּשָׂר מִפְּנֵי יְהוִה in ch. ii. 17; and Jeremiah formed the expressions קַלּוּ מְנַשְּׁרִים סוּסָיו in ch. iv. 13 and זְאֵב עֲרָבוֹת in ch. v. 6 on the basis of קַלּוּ מִנְּמֵרִים סוּסָיו וְחַדּוּ מִזְּאֵבֵי עֶרֶב in Hab. i. 8, not to mention other passages of Jeremiah that have the ring of our prophet, which Delitzsch has collected in his *Der Proph. Hab. ausgelegt* (p. xii.). This decidedly upsets the theory that Habakkuk did not begin to prophesy till the reign of Jehoiakim; although, as such resemblances and allusions do not preclude the contemporaneous ministry of the prophets, there still remains the possibility that Habakkuk may not have prophesied till the time of Josiah, and indeed not before the twelfth year of Josiah's reign, when he commenced the extermination of idolatry and the restoration of the worship of Jehovah, since Habakkuk's prayer, which was intended according to the subscription for use in the temple, presupposes the restoration of the Jehovah-worship with the liturgical service of song. But the possibility is not yet raised into a certainty by these circumstances. Manasseh also caused the idols to be cleared away from the temple after his return from imprisonment in Babylon, and not only restored the altar of Jehovah, and ordered praise-offerings and thank-offerings to be presented upon it, but commanded the people to serve Jehovah the God of Israel (2 Chron. xxxiii. 15, 16). Consequently Habakkuk might have composed his psalm at that time for use in the temple service. And this conjecture as to its age acquires extreme probability when we look carefully at the

contents and form of the prophecy. Apart from the rather more distinct and special description of the wild, warlike, and predatory nature of the Chaldæans, the contents retain throughout an ideal character, without any allusion to particular historical relations, such as we find for example in great abundance in Jeremiah, who prophesied in the thirteenth year of Josiah, and which are not altogether wanting in Zephaniah, notwithstanding the comprehensive character of his prophecy. If we look at the form, Habakkuk's prophecy still bears completely the antique stamp of the earlier prophetic literature. "His language," to use the words of Delitzsch, "is classical throughout, full of rare and select words and turns, which are to some extent exclusively his own, whilst his view and mode of presentation bear the seal of independent force and finished beauty. Notwithstanding the violent rush and lofty soaring of the thoughts, his prophecy forms a finely organized and artistically rounded whole. Like Isaiah, he is, comparatively speaking, much more independent of his predecessors, both in contents and form, than any other of the prophets. Everything reflects the time when prophecy was in its greatest glory, when the place of the sacred lyrics, in which the religious life of the church had hitherto expressed itself, was occupied, through a still mightier interposition on the part of God, by prophetic poetry with its trumpet voice, to reawaken in the church, now spiritually dead, the consciousness of God which had so utterly disappeared." On the other hand, the turning-point came as early as Zechariah, and from that time forwards the poetic swing of the prophetic addresses declines and gradually disappears, the dependence upon the earlier predecessors becomes more predominant; and even with such thoroughly original natures as Ezekiel and Zechariah, their style of composition cannot rise very far above simple prose.

2. THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK contains neither a collection of oracles, nor the condensation into one discourse of the essential contents of several prophetic addresses, but one single prophecy arranged in two parts. In the *first* part (ch. i. and ii.), under the form of a conversation between God and the prophet, we have first of all an announcement of the judgment which God is about to bring upon the degenerate covenant

nation through the medium of the Chaldæans; and *secondly*, an announcement of the overthrow of the Chaldæan, who has lifted himself up even to the deification of his own power. To this there is appended in ch. iii., as a second part, the prophet's prayer for the fulfilment of the judgment; and an exalted lyric psalm, in which Habakkuk depicts the coming of the Lord in the terrible glory of the Almighty, at whose wrath the universe is terrified, to destroy the wicked and save His people and His anointed, and gives utterance to the feelings which the judgment of God will awaken in the hearts of the righteous. The whole of the prophecy has an ideal and universal stamp. Not even Judah and Jerusalem are mentioned, and the Chaldæans who are mentioned by name are simply introduced as the existing possessors of the imperial power of the world, which was bent upon the destruction of the kingdom of God, or as the sinners who swallow up the righteous man. The announcement of judgment is simply a detailed expansion of the thought that the unjust man and the sinner perish, whilst the just will live through his faith (ch. ii. 4). This prophecy hastens on towards its fulfilment, and even though it should tarry, will assuredly take place at the appointed time (ch. ii. 2, 3). Through the judgment upon the godless ones in Judah and upon the Chaldæans, the righteousness of the holy God will be manifested, and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord (ch. ii. 14). Although the fact that the Chaldæans are mentioned by name leaves no doubt whatever that the judgment will burst upon Judah through this wild conquering people, the prophecy rises immediately from this particular judgment to a view of the universal judgment upon all nations, yea, upon the whole of the ungodly world, to proclaim their destruction and the dawning of salvation for the people of the Lord and the Lord's anointed; so that the trembling at the terrors of judgment is resolved at the close into joy and exultation in the God of salvation. There can be no doubt as to the unity of the book; and the attempt to interpret the threat of judgment in ch. ii. by applying it to particular historical persons and facts, has utterly failed.

For the exegetical works on Habakkuk, see my *Einleitung in das alte Testament*, § 302–3.

EXPOSITION.

THE JUDGMENT UPON THE WICKED.—CHAP. I. AND II.

CHASTISEMENT OF JUDAH THROUGH THE CHALDÆANS.—CHAP. I.

The lamentation of the prophet over the dominion of wickedness and violence (vers. 2–4) is answered thus by the Lord: He will raise up the Chaldæans, who are to execute the judgment, as a terrible, world-conquering people, but who will offend by making their might into their god (vers. 5–11); whereupon the prophet, trusting in the Lord, who has proved Himself to His people from time immemorial to be a holy and righteous God, expresses the hope that this chastisement will not lead to death, and addresses the question to God, whether with His holiness He can look calmly upon the wickedness of this people, in gathering men into their net like fishes, and continuing in the most unsparing manner to slay the nations (vers. 12–17).

Ver. 1 contains the heading not only to ch. i. and ii., but to the whole book, of which ch. iii. forms an integral part. On the special heading in ch. iii. 1, see the comm. on that verse. The prophet calls his writing a *massâ'*, or burden (see at Nahum i. 1), because it announces heavy judgments upon the covenant nation and the imperial power.

Vers. 2–4. The prophet's lamentation. Ver. 2. "*How long, Jehovah, have I cried, and Thou hearest not? I cry to Thee, Violence; and Thou helpest not!* Ver. 3. *Why dost Thou let me see mischief, and Thou lookest upon distress? devastation and violence are before me: there arises strife, and contention lifts itself up.* Ver. 4. *Therefore the law is benumbed, and justice comes not forth for ever: for sinners encircle the righteous man; therefore justice goes forth perverted.*" This complaint, which involves a petition for help, is not merely an expression of the prophet's personal desire for the removal of the prevailing unrighteousness; but the prophet laments, in the name of the righteous, *i.e.* the believers in the nation, who had to suffer

under the oppression of the wicked; not, however, as Rosenmüller and Ewald, with many of the Rabbins, suppose, over the acts of wickedness and violence which the Chaldæans performed in the land, but over the wicked conduct of the ungodly of his own nation. For it is obvious that these verses refer to the moral depravity of Judah, from the fact that God announces His purpose to raise up the Chaldæans to punish it (vers. 5 sqq.). It is true that, in vers. 9 and 13, wickedness and violence are attributed to the Chaldæans also; but all that can be inferred from this is, that "in the punishment of the Jewish people a divine *talio* prevails, which will eventually fall upon the Chaldæans also" (Delitzsch). The calling for help (שָׁוְעַ) is described, in the second clause, as crying over wickedness. חָמָס is an accusative, denoting what he cries, as in Job xix. 7 and Jer. xx. 8, viz. the evil that is done. Not hearing is equivalent to not helping. The question עַד־אָנָה indicates that the wicked conduct has continued a long time, without God having put a stop to it. This appears irreconcilable with the holiness of God. Hence the question in ver. 3: Wherefore dost Thou cause me to see mischief, and lookest upon it Thyself? which points to Num. xxiii. 21, viz. to the words of Balaam, "God hath not beheld iniquity (*'âven*) in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness (*'âmâl*) in Israel." This word of God, in which Balaam expresses the holiness of Israel, which remains true to the idea of its divine election, is put before the Lord in the form of a question, not only to give prominence to the falling away of the people from their divine calling, and their degeneracy into the very opposite of what they ought to be, but chiefly to point to the contradiction involved in the fact, that God the Holy One does now behold the evil in Israel and leave it unpunished. God not only lets the prophet see iniquity, but even looks at Himself. This is at variance with His holiness. אָוֶן, nothingness, then worthlessness, wickedness (cf. Isa. i. 13). עָמָל, labour, then distress which a man experiences or causes to others (cf. Isa. x. 1). הַבִּיט, to see, not to cause to see. Ewald has revoked the opinion, that we have here a fresh *hiphil*, derived from a *hiphil*. With שֹׁד וגו׳ the address is continued in the form of a simple picture. *Shōd vᵉḥâmâs* are often connected (*e.g.* Amos iii. 10; Jer. vi. 7, xx. 8; Ezek. xlv. 9). *Shōd* is violent treatment causing desolation. *Châmâs* is mali-

cious conduct intended to injure another. וַיְהִי, it comes to pass, there arises strife (*rîbh*) in consequence of the violent and wicked conduct. יִשָּׂא, to rise up, as in Hos. xiii. 1, Ps. lxxxix. 10. The consequences of this are relaxation of the law, etc. עַל־כֵּן, therefore, because God does not interpose to stop the wicked conduct. פּוּג, to relax, to stiffen, *i.e.* to lose one's vital strength, or energy. *Tôrâh* is "the revealed law in all its substance, which was meant to be the soul, the heart of political, religious, and domestic life" (Delitzsch). Right does not come forth, *i.e.* does not manifest itself, *lânetsach*, lit. for a permanence, *i.e.* for ever, as in many other passages, *e.g.* Ps. xiii. 2, Isa. xiii. 20. לָנֶצַח belongs to לֹא, not for ever, *i.e.* never more. *Mishpât* is not merely a righteous verdict, however; in which case the meaning would be: There is no more any righteous verdict given, but a righteous state of things, objective right in the civil and political life. For godless men (רָשָׁע, without an article, is used with indefinite generality or in a collective sense) encircle the righteous man, so that the righteous cannot cause right to prevail. Therefore right comes forth perverted. The second clause, commencing with עַל־כֵּן, completes the first, adding a positive assertion to the negative. The right, which does still come to the light, is מְעֻקָּל, twisted, perverted, the opposite of right. To this complaint Jehovah answers in vers. 5–11 that He will do a marvellous work, inflict a judgment corresponding in magnitude to the prevailing injustice.

Ver. 5. "*Look ye among the nations, and see, and be amazed, amazed! for I work a work in your days: ye would not believe it if it were told you.*" The appeal to see and be amazed is addressed to the prophet and the people of Judah together. It is very evident from ver. 6 that Jehovah Himself is speaking here, and points by anticipation to the terrible nature of the approaching work of His punitive righteousness, although פֹּעַל is written indefinitely, without any pronoun attached. Moreover, as Delitzsch and Hitzig observe, the meaning of the appeal is not, "Look round among the nations, whether any such judgment has ever occurred;" but, "Look about among the nations, for it is thence that the terrible storm will burst that is about to come upon you" (cf. Jer. xxv. 32, xiii. 20). The first and ordinary view, in support of which Lam. i. 12,

Jer. ii. 10 and xviii. 13, are generally adduced, is precluded by the fact, (1) that it is not stated for what they are to look round, namely, whether anything of the kind has occurred here or there (Jer. ii. 10); (2) that the unparalleled occurrence has not been mentioned at all yet; and (3) that what they are to be astonished or terrified at is not their failure to discover an analogy, but the approaching judgment itself. The combination of the *kal*, *tâmâh*, with the *hiphil* of the same verb serves to strengthen it, so as to express the highest degree of amazement (cf. Zeph. ii. 1, Ps. cxviii. 11, and Ewald, § 313, *c*). כִּי, *for*, introduces the reason not only for the amazement, but also for the summons to look round. The two clauses of the second hemistich correspond to the two clauses of the first half of the verse. They are to look round, because Jehovah is about to perform a work; they are to be amazed, or terrified, because this work is an amazing or a terrible one. The participle פֹּעֵל denotes that which is immediately at hand, and is used absolutely, without a pronoun. According to ver. 6, אֲנִי is the pronoun we have to supply. For it is not practicable to supply הוּא, or to take the participle in the sense of the third person, since God, when speaking to the people, cannot speak of Himself in the third person, and even in that case יְהוָה could not be omitted. Hitzig's idea is still more untenable, namely, that *pō'al* is the subject, and that *pō'ēl* is used in an intransitive sense: the work produces its effect. We must assume, as Delitzsch does, that there is a proleptical ellipsis, *i.e.* one in which the word immediately following is omitted (as in Isa. xlviii. 11, Zech. ix. 17). The admissibility of this assumption is justified by the fact that there are other cases in which the participle is used and the pronoun omitted; and that not merely the pronoun of the third person (*e.g.* Isa. ii. 11, Jer. xxxviii. 23), but that of the second person also (1 Sam. ii. 24, vi. 3, and Ps. vii. 10). On the expression בִּימֵיכֶם (in your days), see the Introduction, p. 51. לֹא תַאֲמִינוּ, ye would not believe it if it were told you, namely, as having occurred in another place or at another time, if ye did not see it yourselves (Delitzsch and Hitzig). Compare Acts xiii. 41, where the Apostle Paul threatens the despisers of the gospel with judgment in the words of our verse.

Vers. 6–11. Announcement of this work.—Ver. 6. "*For*,

behold, I cause the Chaldæans to rise up, the fierce and vehement nation, which marches along the breadths of the earth, to take possession of dwelling-places that are not its own. Ver. 7. *It is alarming and fearful: its right and its eminence go forth from it.* Ver. 8. *And its horses are swifter than leopards, and more sudden than evening wolves: and its horsemen spring along; and its horsemen, they come from afar; they fly hither, hastening like an eagle to devour.* Ver. 9. *It comes all at once for wickedness; the endeavour of their faces is directed forwards, and it gathers prisoners together like sand.* Ver. 10. *And it, kings it scoffs at, and princes are laughter to it; it laughs at every stronghold, and heaps up sand, and takes it.* Ver. 11. *Then it passes along, a wind, and comes hither and offends: this its strength is its god.*" הִנְנִי מֵקִים, *ecce suscitaturus sum.* הִנֵּה before the participle always refers to the future. הֵקִים, to cause to stand up or appear, does not apply to the elevation of the Chaldæans into a nation or a conquering people,—for the picture which follows and is defined by the article הַגּוֹי וגו׳ presupposes that it already exists as a conquering people,—but to its being raised up against Judah, so that it is equivalent to מֵקִים עֲלֵיכֶם in Amos vi. 14 (cf. Mic. v. 4, 2 Sam. xii. 11, etc.). *Hakkasdīm*, the Chaldæans, sprang, according to Gen. xxii. 22, from *Kesed* the son of Nahor, the brother of Abraham; so that they were a Semitic race. They dwelt from time immemorial in Babylonia or Mesopotamia, and are called a primeval people, *gōi mē'ōlâm*, in Jer. v. 15. Abram migrated to Canaan from *Ur* of the Chaldees, from the other side of the river (Euphrates: Gen. xi. 28, 31, compared with Josh. xxiv. 2); and the *Kasdīm* in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel are inhabitants of Babel or Babylonia (Isa. xliii. 14, xlvii. 1, xlviii. 14, 20; Jer. xxi. 9, xxxii. 4, 24, etc.; Ezek. xxiii. 23). Babylonia is called *'erets Kasdīm* (Jer. xxiv. 5, xxv. 12; Ezek. xii. 13), or simply *Kasdīm* (Jer. l. 10, li. 24, 35; Ezek. xvi. 29, xxiii. 16). The modern hypothesis, that the Chaldæans were first of all transplanted by the Assyrians from the northern border mountains of Armenia, Media, and Assyria to Babylonia, and that having settled there, they afterwards grew into a cultivated people, and as a conquering nation exerted great influence in the history of the world, simply rests upon a most precarious interpretation of an obscure passage in Isaiah (Isa. xxiii. 18), and

has no higher value than the opinion of the latest Assyriologists that the Chaldæans are a people of Tatar origin, who mingled with the Shemites of the countries bordering upon the Euphrates and Tigris (see Delitzsch on Isa. xxiii. 13). Habakkuk describes this people as *mar*, bitter, or rough, and, when used to denote a disposition, fierce (*mar nephesh*, Judg. xviii. 25, 2 Sam. xvii. 8); and *nimhâr*, heedless or rash (Isa. xxxii. 4), here violent, and as moving along the breadths of the earth (ἐπὶ τὰ πλάτη τῆς γῆς, LXX.: cf. Rev. xx. 9), *i.e.* marching through the whole extent of the earth (Isa. viii. 8): *terram quam late patet* (Ros.). ל is not used here to denote the direction or the goal, but the space, as in Gen. xiii. 17 (Hitzig, Delitzsch). To take possession of dwelling-places that are not his own (אֲשֶׁר לֹא־לוֹ = לֹא־לוֹ), *i.e.* to take possession of foreign lands that do not belong to him. In ver. 7 the fierce disposition of this people is still further depicted, and in ver. 8 the violence with which it advances. אָיֹם, *formidabilis*, exciting terror; נוֹרָא, *metuendus*, creating alarm. מִמֶּנּוּ וגו׳, from it, not from God (cf. Ps. xvii. 2), does its right proceed, *i.e.* it determines right, and the rule of its conduct, according to its own standard; and שְׂאֵתוֹ, its eminence (Gen. xlix. 3; Hos. xiii. 1), "its δόξα (1 Cor. xi. 7) above all other nations" (Hitzig), making itself lord through the might of its arms. Its horses are lighter, *i.e.* swifter of foot, than panthers, which spring with the greatest rapidity upon their prey (for proofs of the swiftness of the panther, see Bochart, *Hieroz.* ii. p. 104, ed. Ros.), and חַדּוּ, *lit.* sharper, *i.e.* shooting sharply upon it. As *qâlal* represents swiftness as a light rapid movement, which hardly touches the ground, so *châdad*, ὀξὺν εἶναι, describes it as a hasty precipitate dash upon a certain object (Delitzsch). The first clause of this verse has been repeated by Jeremiah (iv. 13), with the alteration of one letter (viz. מְנֻשָּׂרִים for מְנֻמָּרִים). Wolves of the evening (cf. Zeph. iii. 3) are wolves which go out in the evening in search of prey, after having fasted through the day, not "wolves of Arabia (עֲרַב = עֲרָב, LXX.) or of the desert" (עֲרָבָה, Kimchi). *Pâshū* from *pūsh*, after the Arabic فاش, *med. Ye*, to strut proudly; when used of a horse and its rider, to spring along, to gallop; or of a calf, to hop or jump (Jer. l. 11; Mal. iii. 20). The connection between this

and *pūsh* (Nah. iii. 18), *niphal* to disperse or scatter one's self, is questionable. Delitzsch (on Job xxxv. 15) derives *pūsh* in this verse and the passage cited from ناس, *med. Vav*, in the sense of swimming upon the top, and apparently traces *pūsh* in Nah. iii., as well as *pāsh* in Job xxxv. 15, to فش (when used of water: to overflow its dam); whilst Freytag (in the *Lexicon*) gives, as the meaning of فش II., *dissolvit, dissipavit*. *Pârâshīm* are horsemen, not riding-horses. The repetition of פָּרָשָׁיו does not warrant our erasing the words וּפָשׁוּ פָּרָשָׁיו as a gloss, as Hitzig proposes. It can be explained very simply from the fact, that in the second hemistich Habakkuk passes from the general description of the Chaldæans to a picture of their invasion of Judah. מֵרָחוֹק, from afar, *i.e.* from Babylonia (cf. Isa. xxxix. 3). Their coming from afar, and the comparison of the rushing along of the Chaldæan horsemen to the flight of an eagle, points to the threat in Deut. xxviii. 49, "Jehovah shall bring against thee a nation from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth," which is now about to be fulfilled. Jeremiah frequently uses the same comparison when speaking of the Chaldæans, viz. in Jer. iv. 13, xlviii. 40, xlix. 22, and Lam. iv. 19 (cf. 2 Sam. i. 23). The ἅπ. λεγ. מְנַמָּה may mean a horde or crowd, after the Hebrew נם, and the Arabic جمة, or snorting, endeavouring, striving, after جم, and جام, *appetivit*, in which case נמם would be connected with נמא, to swallow. But the first meaning does not suit פְּנֵיהֶם קָדִימָה, whereas the second does. קָדִימָה, not eastwards, but according to the primary meaning of קֶדֶם, to the front, forwards. Ewald renders it incorrectly: "the striving of their face is to storm, *i.e.* to mischief;" for *qâdīm*, the east wind, when used in the sense of storm, is a figurative expression for that which is vain and worthless (Hos. xii. 2; cf. Job xv. 2), but not for mischief. For וַיֶּאֱסֹף, compare Gen. xli. 49 and Zech. ix. 3; and for כַּחוֹל, like sand of the sea, Hos. ii. 1. In ver. 10 וְהוּא and הוּא are introduced, that the words בַּמְּלָכִים and לְכָל־מִבְצָר, upon which the emphasis lies, may be placed first. It, the Chaldæan nation,

scoffs at kings and princes, and every stronghold, *i.e.* it ridicules all the resistance that kings and princes offer to its advance, by putting forth their strength, as a perfectly fruitless attempt. *Mischâq*, the object of laughter. The words, it heaps up dust and takes it (the fortress), express the facility with which every fortress is conquered by it. To heap up dust: denoting the casting up an embankment for attack (2 Sam. xx. 15, etc.). The feminine suffix attached to יִלְכְּדָהּ refers *ad sensum* to the idea of a city (עִיר), implied in מִבְצָר, the latter being equivalent to עִיר מִבְצָר in 1 Sam. vi. 18, 2 Kings iii. 19, etc. Thus will the Chaldæan continue incessantly to overthrow kings and conquer kingdoms with tempestuous rapidity, till he offends, by deifying his own power. With this gentle hint at the termination of his tyranny, the announcement of the judgment closes in ver. 11. אָז, *there*, *i.e.* in this appearance of his, as depicted in vers. 6–10: not "then," in which case ver. 11 would affirm to what further enterprises the Chaldæans would proceed after their rapidly and easily effected conquests. The perfects חָלַף and יַעֲבוֹר are used prophetically, representing the future as occurring already. חָלַף and עָבַר are used synonymously: to pass along and go further, used of the wind or tempest, as in Isa. xxi. 1; here, as in Isa. viii. 8, of the hostile army overflowing the land; with this difference, however, that in Isaiah it is thought of as a stream of water, whereas here it is thought of as a tempest sweeping over the land. The subject to *châlaph* is not *rûăch*, but the Chaldæan (הוּא, ver. 10); and *rûăch* is used appositionally, to denote the manner in which it passes along, viz. "like a tempestuous wind" (*rûăch* as in Job xxx. 15, Isa. vii. 2). וְאָשֵׁם is not a participle, but a perfect with *Vav rel.*, expressing the consequence, "and so he offends." In what way is stated in the last clause, in which זוּ does not answer to the relative אֲשֶׁר, in the sense of "he whose power," but is placed demonstratively before the noun כֹּחוֹ, like זֶה in Ex. xxxii. 1, Josh. ix. 12, 13, and Isa. xxiii. 13 (cf. Ewald, § 293, *b*), pointing back to the strength of the Chaldæan, which has been previously depicted in its intensive and extensive greatness (Delitzsch). This its power is god to it, *i.e.* it makes it into its god (for the thought, compare Job xii. 6, and the words of the Assyrian in Isa. x. 13). The ordinary explanation of the first hemistich is, on the other hand, untenable

(then its courage becomes young again, or grows), since רוּחַ cannot stand for רוּחוֹ, and עָבַר without an object given in the context cannot mean to overstep, *i.e.* to go beyond the proper measure.

Ver. 12. On this threatening announcement of the judgment by God, the prophet turns to the Lord in the name of believing Israel, and expresses the confident hope that He as the Holy One will not suffer His people to perish. Ver. 12. "*Art Thou not from olden time, O Jehovah, my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. Jehovah, for judgment hast Thou appointed it; and, O Rock, founded it for chastisement.*" However terrible and prostrating the divine threatening may sound, the prophet draws consolation and hope from the holiness of the faithful covenant God, that Israel will not perish, but that the judgment will be only a severe chastisement.[1] The supplicatory question with which he soars to this hope of faith is closely connected with the divine and threatening prophecy in ver. 11. The Chaldæan's god is his own strength; but Israel's God is Jehovah, the Holy One. On the interrogative form of the words ("art Thou not?"), which requires an affirmative reply, Luther has aptly observed that "he speaks to God interrogatively, asking whether He will do this and only punish; not that he has any doubt on the subject, but that he shows how faith is sustained in the midst of conflicts,—namely, that it appears as weak as if it did not believe, and would sink at once, and fall into despair on account of the great calamity which crushes it. For although faith stands firm, yet it cracks, and speaks in a very different tone when in the midst of the conflict from what it does when the victory is gained." But as the question is sure to receive an affirmative reply, the prophet draws this inference from it: "we shall not die," we Thy people shall not perish. This hope rests upon two foundations: viz. (1) from time immemorial Jehovah is Israel's God; and

[1] "Therefore," says Calvin, "whoever desires to fight bravely with the ungodly, let him first, settle the matter with God Himself, and, as it were, confirm and ratify that treaty which God has set before us, namely, that we are His people, and He will be a God to us in return. And because God makes a covenant with us in this manner, it is necessary that our faith should be well established, that we may go forth to the conflict with all the ungodly."

(2) He is the Holy One of Israel, who cannot leave wickedness unpunished either in Israel or in the foe. This leads to the further conclusion, that Jehovah has simply appointed the Chaldæan nation to execute the judgment, to chastise Israel, and not to destroy His people. The three predicates applied to God have equal weight in the question. The God to whom the prophet prays is *Jehovah*, the absolutely constant One, who is always the same in word and work (see at Gen. ii. 4); He is also *Elohai*, *my*, *i.e.* Israel's, God, who from time immemorial has proved to the people whom He had chosen as His possession that He is their God; and קְדֹשִׁי, the Holy One of Israel, the absolutely Pure One, who cannot look upon evil, and therefore cannot endure that the wicked should devour the righteous (ver. 13). לֹא נָמוּת is not a supplicatory wish: Let us not die therefore; but a confident assertion: "We shall not die."[1] In the second half of the verse, *Y'hōvâh* and *tsūr* (rock) are vocatives. *Tsūr*, as an epithet applied to God, is taken from Deut. xxxii. 4, 15, 18, and 37, where God is first called the Rock of Israel, as the unchangeable refuge of His people's trust. *Lammishpât*, *i.e.* to accomplish the judgment: comp. Isa. x. 5, 6, where Asshur is called the rod of Jehovah's wrath. In the parallel clause we have לְהוֹכִיחַ instead: "to chastise," namely Israel, not the Chaldæans, as Ewald supposes.

The believing confidence expressed in this verse does not appear to be borne out by what is actually done by God. The prophet proceeds to lay this enigma before God in vers. 13–17,

[1] According to the Masora, לֹא נָמוּת stands as תקון סופרים, *i.e. correctio scribarum* for לֹא תָמוּת, thou wilt not die. These *tikkune sophrim*, however, of which the Masora reckons eighteen, are not alterations of original readings proposed by the *sophrim*, but simply traditional definitions of what the sacred writers originally intended to write, though they afterwards avoided it or gave a different turn. Thus the prophet intended to write here: "Thou (God) wilt not die;" but in the consciousness that this was at variance with the divine decorum, he gave it this turn, "We shall not die." But this rabbinical conjecture rests upon the erroneous assumption that מִקֶּדֶם is a predicate, and the thought of the question is this: "Thou art from of old, Thou Jehovah my God, my Holy One," according to which לֹא תָמוּת would be an exegesis of מִקֶּדֶם, which is evidently false. For further remarks on the *tikkune sophrim*, see Delitzsch's *Commentary on Hab. l.c.*, and the Appendix, p. 206 sqq.

and to pray for his people to be spared during the period of the Chaldæan affliction. Ver. 13. "*Art Thou too pure of eye to behold evil, and canst Thou not look upon distress? Wherefore lookest Thou upon the treacherous? and art silent when the wicked devours one more righteous than he?* Ver. 14. *And Thou hast made men like fishes of the sea, like reptiles that have no ruler.* Ver. 15. *All of them hath he lifted up with the hook; he draws them into his net, and gathers them in his fishing net; he rejoices thereat, and is glad.* Ver. 16. *Therefore he sacrifices to his net, and burns incense to his landing net; for through them is his portion rich, and his food fat.* Ver. 17. *Shall he therefore empty his net, and always strangle nations without sparing?*" In ver. 13, טְהוֹר עֵינַיִם, with the two clauses dependent upon it, stands as a vocative, and טְהוֹר followed by מִן as a comparative: purer of eyes than to be able to see. This epithet is applied to God as the pure One, whose eyes cannot bear what is morally unclean, *i.e.* cannot look upon evil. The purity of God is not measured here by His seeing evil, but is described as exalted above it, and not coming at all into comparison with it. On the relation in which these words stand to Num. xxiii. 21, see the remarks on ver. 3. In the second clause the infinitive construction passes over into the finite verb, as is frequently the case; so that אֲשֶׁר must be supplied in thought: who canst not look upon, *i.e.* canst not tolerate, the distress which the wicked man prepares for others. Wherefore then lookest Thou upon treacherous ones, namely, the Chaldæans? They are called בּוֹגְדִים, from their faithlessly deceptive and unscrupulously rapacious conduct, as in Isa. xxi. 2, xxiv. 16. That the seeing is a quiet observance, without interposing to punish, is evident from the parallel תַּחֲרִישׁ: Thou art silent at the swallowing of the צַדִּיק מִמֶּנּוּ. The more righteous than he (the ungodly one) is not the nation of Israel as such, which, if not perfectly righteous, was relatively more righteous than the Chaldæans. This rabbinical view is proved to be erroneous, by the fact that in vers. 2 and 3 the prophet describes the moral depravity of Israel in the same words as those which he here applies to the conduct of the Chaldæans. The persons intended are rather the godly portion of Israel, who have to share in the expiation of the sins of the ungodly, and suffer when they are punished (Delitzsch). This fact, that the righteous is swallowed

along with the unrighteous, appears irreconcilable with the holiness of God, and suggests the inquiry, how God can possibly let this be done. This strange fact is depicted still further in vers. 14–16 in figures taken from the life of a fisherman. The men are like fishes, whom the Chaldæan collects together in his net, and then pays divine honour to his net, by which he has been so enriched. וְתַעֲשֶׂה is not dependent upon לָמָּה, but continues the address in a simple picture, in which the imperfect with *Vav convers.* represents the act as the natural consequence of the silence of God: "and so Thou makest the men like fishes," etc. The point of comparison lies in the relative clause לֹא־מֹשֵׁל בּוֹ, "which has no ruler," which is indeed formally attached to רֶמֶשׂ alone, but in actual fact belongs to דְּגֵי הַיָּם also. "No ruler," to take the defenceless under his protection, and shelter and defend them against enemies. Then will Judah be taken prisoner and swallowed up by the Chaldæans. God has given it helplessly up to the power of its foes, and has obviously ceased to be its king. Compare the similar lamentation in Isa. lxiii. 19: "are even like those over whom Thou hast never ruled." רֶמֶשׂ, the creeping thing, the smaller animals which exist in great multitudes, and move with great swiftness, refers here to the smaller water animals, to which the word *remes* is also applied in Ps. civ. 25, and the verb *râmâs* in Gen. i. 21 and Lev. xi. 46. כַּלָּה, pointing back to the collective *'âdâm*, is the object, and is written first for the sake of emphasis. The form הַעֲלָה, instead of הֶעֱלָה, is analogous to the *hophal* הֹעֲלָה in Nahum ii. 8 and Judg. vi. 28, and also to הֶעֱבַרְתָּ in Josh. vii. 7: to take up out of the water (see Ges. § 63, Anm. 4). יְנַהֲגוּ from נָהַר, to pull, to draw together. *Chakkâh* is the hook, *cherem* the net generally, *mikhmereth* the large fishing-net (*σαγήνη*), the lower part of which, when sunk, touches the bottom, whilst the upper part floats on the top of the water. These figures are not to be interpreted with such speciality as that the net and fishing net answer to the sword and bow; but the hook, the net, and the fishing net, as the things used for catching fish, refer to all the means which the Chaldæans employ in order to subdue and destroy the nations. Luther interprets it correctly. "These hooks, nets, and fishing nets," he says, "are nothing more than his great and powerful armies, by which he gained dominion over all lands and people, and

brought home to Babylon the goods, jewels, silver, and gold, interest and rent of all the world." He rejoices over the success of his enterprises, over this capture of men, and sacrifices and burns incense to his 'net, *i.e.* he attributes to the means which he has employed the honour due to God. There is no allusion in these words to the custom of the Scythians and Sauromatians, who are said by Herodotus (iv. 59, 60) to have offered sacrifices every year to a sabre, which was set up as a symbol of Mars. What the Chaldæan made into his god, is expressed in ver. 11, namely, his own power. "He who boasts of a thing, and is glad and joyous on account of it, but does not thank the true God, makes himself into an idol, gives himself the glory, and does not rejoice in God, but in his own strength and work" (Luther). The Chaldæan sacrifices to his net, for thereby (בַּחֲמָתוֹ, by net and yarn) his portion (*chelqō*) is fat, *i.e.* the portion of this booty which falls to him, and fat is his food (בְּרִאָה is a neuter substantive). The meaning is, that he thereby attains to wealth and prosperity. In ver. 17 there is appended to this the question embracing the thought: Shall he therefore, because he rejoices over his rich booty, or offers sacrifice to his net, empty his net, *sc.* to throw it in afresh, and proceed continually to destroy nations in so unsparing a manner? In the last clause the figure passes over into a literal address. The place of the imperfect is now taken by a periphrastic construction with the infinitive: Shall he constantly be about to slay? On this construction, see Ges. § 132, 3, Anm. 1, and Ewald, § 237, *c.* לֹא יַחְמוֹל is a subordinate clause appended in an adverbial sense: unsparingly, without sparing.

DESTRUCTION OF THE UNGODLY WORLD-POWER.—CHAP. II.

After receiving an answer to this supplicatory cry, the prophet receives a command from God: to write the oracle in plain characters, because it is indeed certain, but will not be immediately fulfilled (vers. 1–3). Then follows the word of God, that the just will live through his faith, but he that is proud and not upright will not continue (vers. 4, 5); accompanied by a fivefold woe upon the Chaldæan, who gathers all nations to himself with insatiable greediness (vers. 6–20).

Vers. 1–3 form the introduction to the word of God, which

the prophet receives in reply to his cry of lamentation addressed to the Lord in ch. i. 12–17. Ver. 1. "*I will stand upon my watch-tower, and station myself upon the fortress, and will watch to see what He will say in me, and what I answer to my complaint.* Ver. 2. *Then Jehovah answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon the tables, that he may run who reads it.* Ver. 3. *For the vision is yet for the appointed end, and strives after the end, and does not lie: if it tarry, wait for it; for it will come, it does not fail.*" Ver. 1 contains the prophet's conversation with himself. After he has poured out his trouble at the judgment announced, in a lamentation to the Lord (ch. i. 12–17), he encourages himself—after a pause, which we have to imagine after ch. i. 17—to wait for the answer from God. He resolves to place himself upon his observatory, and look out for the revelation which the Lord will give to his questions. *Mishmereth*, a place of waiting or observing; *mâtsôr*, a fortress, *i.e.* a watch-tower or spying-tower. Standing upon the watch, and stationing himself upon the fortification, are not to be understood as something external, as Hitzig supposes, implying that the prophet went up to a steep and lofty place, or to an actual tower, that he might be far away from the noise and bustle of men, and there turn his eyes towards heaven, and direct his collected mind towards God, to look out for a revelation. For nothing is known of any such custom as this, since the cases mentioned in Ex. xxxiii. 21 and 1 Kings xix. 11, as extraordinary preparations for God to reveal Himself, are of a totally different kind from this; and the fact that Balaam the soothsayer went up to the top of a bare height, to look out for a revelation from God (Num. xxiii. 3), furnishes no proof that the true prophets of Jehovah did the same, but is rather a heathenish feature, which shows that it was because Balaam did not rejoice in the possession of a firm prophetic word, that he looked out for revelations from God in significant phenomena of nature (see at Num. xxiii. 3, 4). The words of our verse are to be taken figuratively, or internally, like the appointment of the watchman in Isa. xxi. 6. The figure is taken from the custom of ascending high places for the purpose of looking into the distance (2 Kings ix. 17; 2 Sam. xviii. 24), and simply expresses the spiritual preparation of the prophet's soul for hearing the word of God within, *i.e.* the collecting of his mind

by quietly entering into himself, and meditating upon the word and testimonies of God. Cyril and Calvin bring out the first idea. Thus the latter observes, that "the watch-tower is the recesses of the mind, where we withdraw ourselves from the world;" and then adds by way of explanation, "The prophet, under the name of the watch-tower, implies that he extricates himself as it were from the thoughts of the flesh, because there would be no end or measure, if he wished to judge according to his own perception;" whilst others find in it nothing more than firm continuance in reliance upon the word of God.[1] *Tsippâh*, to spy or watch, to wait for the answer from God. "This *watching* was lively and assiduous diligence on the part of the prophet, in carefully observing everything that took place *in the spirit of his mind*, and presented itself either to be seen or heard" (Burk). יְדַבֶּר־בִּי, to speak in me, not merely to or with me; since the speaking of God to the prophets was an internal speaking, and not one that was perceptible from without. What I shall answer to my complaint (*'al tōkhaçhtī*), namely, first of all to myself and then to the rest. *Tōkhachath*, lit. correction, contradiction. Habakkuk refers to the complaint which he raised against God in ch. i. 13–17, namely, that He let the wicked go on unpunished. He will wait for an answer from God to this complaint, to quiet his own heart, which is dissatisfied with the divine administration. Thus he draws a sharp distinction between his own speaking and the speaking of the Spirit of God within him. Jehovah gives the answer in what follows, first of all (vers. 2, 3) commanding him to write the vision (*châzōn*, the revelation from God to be received by inward intuition) upon tables, so clearly, that men may be able to read it in running, *i.e.* quite easily. בָּאַר as in Deut. xxvii. 8; see at Deut. i. 5. The article attached to הַלֻּחוֹת does not point to the tables set up in the market-places for public notices to be written upon (Ewald),

[1] Theodoret very appropriately compares the words of Asaph in Ps. lxxiii. 16 sqq., "When I thought to know this, it was too painful for me, until I entered into the sanctuaries of God, and gave heed to their end;" and observes, "And there, says the prophet, will I remain as appointed, and not leave my post, but, standing upon such a rock as that upon which God placed great Moses, watch with a prophet's eyes for the solution of the things that I seek."

but simply means, make it clear on the tables on which thou shalt write it, referring to the noun implied in כְּתֹב (write), though not expressed (Delitzsch). קוֹרֵא בוֹ may be explained from קָרָא בַּסֵּפֶר in Jer. xxxvi. 13. The question is a disputed one, whether this command is to be understood literally or merely figuratively, "simply denoting the great importance of the prophecy, and the consequent necessity for it to be made accessible to the whole nation" (Hengstenberg, *Dissertation*, vol. i. p. 460). The passages quoted in support of the literal view, *i.e.* of the actual writing of the prophecy which follows upon tables, viz. Isa. viii. 1, xxx. 8, and Jer. xxx. 2, are not decisive. In Jer. xxx. 2 the prophet is commanded to write all the words of the Lord in a book (*sēpher*); and so again in Isa. xxx. 8, if כָּתְבָה עַל־לוּחַ is synonymous with עַל־סֵפֶר חֻקָּה. But in Isa. viii. 1 there are only two significant words, which the prophet is to write upon a large table after having taken witnesses. It does not follow from either of these passages, that *luchōth*, tables, say wooden tables, had been already bound together into books among the Hebrews, so that we could be warranted in identifying the writing plainly upon tables with writing in a book. We therefore prefer the figurative view, just as in the case of the command issued to Daniel, to shut up his prophecy and seal it (Dan. xii. 4), inasmuch as the literal interpretation of the command, especially of the last words, would require that the table should be set up or hung out in some public place, and this cannot for a moment be thought of. The words simply express the thought, that the prophecy is to be laid to heart by all the people on account of its great importance, and that not merely in the present, but in the future also. This no doubt involved the obligation on the part of the prophet to take care, by committing it to writing, that it did not fall into oblivion. The reason for the writing is given in ver. 3. The prophecy is לְמוֹעֵד, for the appointed time; *i.e.* it relates to the period fixed by God for its realization, which was then still (עוֹד) far off. לְ denotes direction towards a certain point either of place or time. The vision had a direction towards a point, which, when looked at from the present, was still in the future. This goal was the end (הַקֵּץ) towards which it hastened, *i.e.* the "last time" (מוֹעֵד קֵץ, Dan. viii. 19; and עֵת קֵץ, Dan. viii. 17, xi. 35), the Messianic times, in which the

judgment would fall upon the power of the world. יָפֵחַ לַקֵּץ, it pants for the end, *inhiat fini*, *i.e.* it strives to reach the end, to which it refers. "True prophecy is inspired, as it were, by an impulse to fulfil itself" (Hitzig). יָפֵחַ is not an adjective, as in Ps. xxvii. 12, but the third pers. imperf. *hiphil* of *pūăch;* and the contracted form (יָפֵחַ for יָפִיחַ), without a voluntative meaning, is the same as we frequently meet with in the loftier style of composition. וְלֹא יְכַזֵּב, "and does not deceive," *i.e.* will assuredly take place. If it (the vision) tarry, *i.e.* be not fulfilled immediately, wait for it, for it will surely take place (the inf. abs. בּוֹא to add force, and בּוֹא applying to the fulfilment of the prophecy, as in 1 Sam. ix. 6 and Jer. xxviii. 9), will not fail; אָחַר, to remain behind, not to arrive (Judg. v. 28; 2 Sam. xx. 5).[1]

Vers. 4, 5. With these verses the prophecy itself commences; namely, with a statement of the fundamental thought, that the presumptuous and proud will not continue, but the just alone will live. Ver. 4. "*Behold, puffed up, his soul is not straight within him: but the just, through his faith will he live.* Ver. 5. *And moreover, the wine is treacherous: a boasting man, he continues not; he who has opened his soul as wide as hell, and is like death, and is not satisfied, and gathered all nations to himself, and collected all peoples to himself.*" These verses, although they contain the fundamental thought, or so to speak the heading of the following announcement of the judgment upon the Chaldæans, are nevertheless not to be regarded as the sum and substance of what the prophet was to write upon the tables. For they do indeed give one characteristic of two classes of men, with a brief intimation of the fate of both, but they contain no formally rounded thought, which could constitute the motto of the whole; on the contrary, the description of the

[1] The LXX. have rendered כִּי בֹא יָבֹא, ὅτι ἐρχόμενος ἥξει, which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. x. 37) has still further defined by adding the article, and, connecting it with μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον of Isa. xxvi. 20 (LXX.), has taken it as Messianic, and applied to the speedy coming of the Messiah to judgment; not, however, according to the exact meaning of the words, but according to the fundamental idea of the prophetic announcement. For the vision, the certain fulfilment of which is proclaimed by Habakkuk, predicts the judgment upon the power of the world, which the Messiah will bring to completion.

insatiable greediness of the Chaldæan is attached in ver. 5*b* to the picture of the haughty sinner, that the two cannot be separated. This picture is given in a subjective clause, which is only completed by the filling up in vers. 6 sqq. The sentence pronounced upon the Chaldæan in vers. 4, 5, simply forms the preparatory introduction to the real answer to the prophet's leading question. The subject is not mentioned in ver. 4*a*, but may be inferred from the prophet's question in ch. i. 12–17. The Chaldæan is meant. His soul is puffed up. עֻפְּלָה, perf. *pual* of עָפַל, of which the *hiphil* only occurs in Num. xiv. 44, and that as synonymous with הָזִיד in Deut. i. 43. From this, as well as from the noun עֹפֶל, a hill or swelling, we get the meaning, to be swollen up, puffed up, proud; and in the *hiphil*, to act haughtily or presumptuously. The thought is explained and strengthened by לֹא יָשְׁרָה, "his soul is not straight." יָשַׁר, to be straight, without turning and trickery, *i.e.* to be upright. בּוֹ does not belong to נַפְשׁוֹ (his soul in him, equivalent to his inmost soul), but to the verbs of the sentence. The early translators and commentators have taken this hemistich differently. They divide it into protasis and apodosis, and take עֻפְּלָה either as the predicate or as the subject. Luther also takes it in the latter sense: "He who is stiff-necked will have no rest in his soul." Burk renders it still more faithfully: *ecce quæ effert se, non recta est anima ejus in eo.* In either case we must supply נֶפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר after עֻפְּלָה. But such an ellipsis as this, in which not only the relative word, but also the noun supporting the relative clause, would be omitted, is unparalleled and inadmissible, if only because of the tautology which would arise from supplying *nephesh*. This also applies to the hypothetical view of הִנֵּה עֻפְּלָה, upon which the Septuagint rendering, ἐὰν ὑποστείληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐν αὐτῷ, is founded. Even with this view *nephesh* could not be omitted as the subject of the protasis, and בּוֹ would have no noun to which to refer. This rendering is altogether nothing more than a conjecture, עפל being confounded with עלף, and נַפְשׁוֹ altered into נַפְשִׁי. Nor is it proved to be correct, by the fact that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. x. 38) makes use of the words of our verse, according to this rendering, to support his admonitions to stedfastness. For he does not introduce the verse as a quotation to prove his words, but simply clothes his own

thoughts in these words of the Bible which floated before his mind, and in so doing transposes the two hemistichs, and thereby gives the words a meaning quite in accordance with the Scriptures, which can hardly be obtained from the Alexandrian version, since we have there to take the subject to ὑποστείληται from the preceding ἐρχόμενος, which gives no sense, whereas by transposing the clauses a very suitable subject can be supplied from ὁ δίκαιος.

The following clause, וְצַדִּיק וגו׳, is attached adversatively, and in form is subordinate to the sentence in the first hemistich in this sense, "whilst, on the contrary, the righteous lives through his faith," notwithstanding the fact that it contains a very important thought, which intimates indirectly that pride and want of uprightness will bring destruction upon the Chaldæan. בֶּאֱמוּנָתוֹ belongs to יִחְיֶה, not to צַדִּיק. The *tiphchah* under the word does not show that it belongs to *tsaddīq*, but simply that it has the leading tone of the sentence, because it is placed with emphasis before the verb (Delitzsch). אֱמוּנָה does not denote "an honourable character, or fidelity to conviction" (Hitzig), but (from *'ăman*, to be firm, to last) firmness (Ex. xvii. 12); then, as an attribute of God, trustworthiness, unchangeable fidelity in the fulfilment of His promises (Deut. xxxii. 4; Ps. xxxiii. 4, lxxxix. 34); and, as a personal attribute of man, fidelity in word and deed (Jer. vii. 28, ix. 2; Ps. xxxvii. 3); and, in his relation to God, firm attachment to God, an undisturbed confidence in the divine promises of grace, *firma fiducia* and *fides*, so that in *'ĕmūnâh* the primary meanings of *ne'ĕmân* and *he'ĕmīn* are combined. This is also apparent from the fact that Abraham is called *ne'ĕmân* in Neh. ix. 8, with reference to the fact that it is affirmed of him in Gen. xv. 6 that הֶאֱמִין בַּיהוָה, "he trusted, or believed, the Lord;" and still more indisputably from the passage before us, since it is impossible to mistake the reference in צַדִּיק בֶּאֱמוּנָתוֹ יִחְיֶה to Gen. xv. 6, "he believed (*he'ĕmīn*) in Jehovah, and He reckoned it to him *lits'dâqâh*." It is also indisputably evident from the context that our passage treats of the relation between man and God, since the words themselves speak of a waiting (*chikkâh*) for the fulfilment of a promising oracle, which is to be preceded by a period of severe suffering. "What is more natural than that life or deliverance from destruction should be promised to that faith which adheres

faithfully to God, holds fast by the word of promise, and confidently waits for its fulfilment in the midst of tribulation? It is not the sincerity, trustworthiness, or integrity of the righteous man, regarded as being virtues in themselves, which are in danger of being shaken and giving way in such times of tribulation, but, as we may see in the case of the prophet himself, his *faith*. To this, therefore, there is appended the great promise expressed in the one word יִחְיֶה" (Delitzsch). And in addition to this, *'ĕmūnâh* is opposed to the pride of the Chaldæan, to his exaltation of himself above God; and for that very reason it cannot denote integrity in itself, but simply some quality which has for its leading feature humble submission to God, that is to say, faith, or firm reliance upon God. The Jewish expositors, therefore, have unanimously retained this meaning here, and the LXX. have rendered the word quite correctly *πίστις*, although by changing the suffix, and giving *ἐκ πίστεώς μου* instead of *αὐτοῦ* (or more properly *ἑαυτοῦ*: Aquila and the other Greek versions), they have missed, or rather perverted, the sense. The deep meaning of these words has been first fully brought out by the Apostle Paul (Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 11: see also Heb. x. 38), who omits the erroneous *μου* of the LXX., and makes the declaration *ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται* the basis of the New Testament doctrine of justification by faith.—Ver. 5 is closely connected with ver. 4*a*, not only developing still further the thought which is there expressed, but applying it to the Chaldæan. אַף כִּי does not mean "really if" (Hitzig and others), even in Job ix. 14, xxxv. 14, Ezek. xv. 5, or 1 Sam. xxi. 6 (see Delitzsch on Job xxxv. 14), but always means "still further," or "yea also, that;" and different applications are given to it, so that, when used as an emphatic assurance, it signifies "to say nothing of the fact that," or when it gives emphasis to the thing itself, "all the more because," and in negative sentences "how much less" (*e.g.* 1 Kings viii. 27). In the present instance it adds a new and important feature to what is stated in ver. 4*a*, "And add to this that wine is treacherous;" *i.e.* to those who are addicted to it, it does not bring strength and life, but leads to the way to ruin (for the thought itself, see Prov. xxiii. 31, 32). The application to the Chaldæan is evident from the context. The fact that the Babylonians were very much addicted to wine is at-

tested by ancient writers. Curtius, for example (v. 1), says, "*Babylonii maxime in vinum et quæ ebrietatem sequuntur effusi sunt;*" and it is well known from Dan. v. that Babylon was conquered while Belshazzar and the great men of his kingdom were feasting at a riotous banquet. The following words גֶּבֶר יָהִיר are not the object to בּוֹגֵד, but form a fresh sentence, parallel to the preceding one: a boasting man, he continueth not. וְלֹא introduces the apodosis to גבר יהיר, which is written absolutely. יָהִיר only occurs again in Prov. xxi. 24, and is used there as a parallel to זֵד: ἀλαζών (LXX.), swaggering, boasting. The allusion to the Chaldæan is evident from the relative clause which follows, and which Delitzsch very properly calls an individualizing exegesis to גבר יהיר. But looking to what follows, this sentence forms a protasis to ver. 6, being written first in an absolute form, "He, the widely opened one, etc., upon him will all take up," etc. *Hirchībh naphshō*, to widen his soul, *i.e.* his desire, parallel to *pâ'ar peh*, to open the mouth (Isa. v. 14), is a figure used to denote insatiable desire. כִּשְׁאוֹל, like Hades, which swallows up every living thing (see Prov. xxvii. 20, xxx. 15, 16). The comparison to death has the same meaning. וְלֹא יִשְׂבַּע does not refer to מָוֶת, but to the Chaldæan, who grasps to himself in an insatiable manner, as in ch. i. 6, 7, and 15–17. The *imperff. consecc.* express the continued gathering up of the nations, which springs out of his insatiable desire.

In vers. 6–20 the destruction of the Chaldæan, which has been already intimated in vers. 4, 5, is announced in the form of a song composed of threatening sentences, which utters woes in five strophes consisting of three verses each: (1) upon the rapacity and plundering of the Chaldæan (vers. 6–8); (2) upon his attempt to establish his dynasty firmly by means of force and cunning (vers. 9–11); (3) upon his wicked ways of building (vers. 12–14); (4) upon his base treatment of the subjugated nations (vers. 15–17); and (5) upon his idolatry (vers. 18–20). These five strophes are connected together, so as to form two larger divisions, by a *refrain* which closes the first and fourth, as well as by the promise explanatory of the threat in which the third and fifth strophes terminate; of which two divisions the first threatens the judgment of retribution upon the insatiableness of the Chaldæan in three woes (ver. 5*b*), and the second in two woes the judgment of retribution upon his

pride. Throughout the whole of the threatening prophecy the Chaldæan nation is embraced, as in vers. 4, 5, in the ideal person of its ruler.[1]

Vers. 6–8. Introduction of the ode and first strophe.—Ver. 6. "*Will not all these lift up a proverb upon him, and a song, a riddle upon him? And men will say, Woe to him who increases what is not his own! For how long? and who loadeth himself with the burden of pledges.* Ver. 7. *Will not thy biters rise up suddenly, and thy destroyers wake up, and thou wilt become booty to them?* Ver. 8. *For thou hast plundered many nations, all the rest of the nations will plunder thee, for the blood of men and wickedness on the earth, the city, and all its inhabitants.*" הֲלוֹא is here, as everywhere else, equivalent to a confident assertion.

[1] The unity of the threatening prophecy, which is brought out in the clearest manner in this formal arrangement, has been torn in pieces in the most violent manner by Hitzig, through his assumption that the oracle of God includes no more than vers. 4–8, and that a second part is appended to it in vers. 9–20, in which the prophet expresses his own thoughts and feelings, first of all concerning king Jehoiakim (vers. 9–14), and then concerning the Egyptians (vers. 15–20). This hypothesis, of which Maurer observes quite correctly, *Qua nulla unquam excogitata est infelicior*, rests upon nothing more than the dogmatic assumption, that there is no such thing as prophecy effected by supernatural causality, and therefore Habakkuk cannot have spoken of Nebuchadnezzar's buildings before they were finished, or at any rate in progress. The two strophes in vers. 9–14 contain nothing whatever that would not apply most perfectly to the Chaldæan, or that is not covered by what precedes and follows (compare ver. 9*a* with 6*b* and 8*a*, and ver. 10 with 5*b* and 8*a*). "The strophe in vers. 9–11 contains the same fundamental thought as that expressed by Isaiah in Isa. xiv. 12–14 respecting the Chaldæan, viz. the description of his pride, which manifests itself in ambitious edifices founded upon the ruins of the prosperity of strangers" (Delitzsch). The resemblance between the contents of this strophe and the woe pronounced upon Jehoiakim by Jeremiah in Jer. xxii. 13–17 may be very simply explained from the fact that Jehoiakim, like the Chaldæan, was a tyrant who occupied himself with the erection of large state buildings and fortifications, whereas the extermination of many nations does not apply in any respect to Jehoiakim. Lastly, there is no plausible ground whatever for referring the last two strophes (vers. 15–20) to the Egyptian, for the assertion that Habakkuk could not pass over the Egyptian in silence, unless he meant to confine himself to the Chaldæan, is a pure *petitio principii;* and to any unprejudiced mind the allusion to the Chaldæan in this verse is placed beyond all possible doubt by Isa. xiv. 8, where the devastation of Lebanon is also attributed to him, just as it is in ver. 17 of our prophecy.

"*All these:*" this evidently points back to "all nations" and "all people." Nevertheless the nations as such, or *in pleno*, are not meant, but simply the believers among them, who expect Jehovah to inflict judgment upon the Chaldæans, and look forward to that judgment for the revelation of the glory of God. For the ode is prophetical in its nature, and is applicable to all times and all nations. *Mâshâl* is a sententious poem, as in Mic. ii. 4 and Isa. xiv. 4, not a derisive song, for this subordinate meaning could only be derived from the context, as in Isa. xiv. 4 for example; and there is nothing to suggest it here. So, again, *mᵉlîtsâh* neither signifies a satirical song, nor an obscure enigmatical discourse, but, as Delitzsch has shown, from the first of the two primary meanings combined in the verb לוּץ, *lucere* and *lascivire*, a brilliant oration, *oratio splendida*, from which מְלִיץ is used to denote an interpreter, so called, not from the obscurity of the speaking, but from his making the speech clear or intelligible. חִידוֹת לוֹ is in apposition to מְלִיצָה and מָשָׁל, adding the more precise definition, that the sayings contain enigmas relating to him (the Chaldæan). The enigmatical feature comes out more especially in the double meaning of עַבְטִיט in ver. 6*b*, נֹשְׁכֶיךָ in ver. 7*a*, and קִיקָלוֹן in ver. 16*b*. וְיֹאמַר serves, like לֵאמֹר elsewhere, as a direct introduction to the speech. The first woe applies to the insatiable rapacity of the Chaldæan. הַמַּרְבֶּה לֹא־לוֹ, who increases what does not belong to him, *i.e.* who seizes upon a large amount of the possessions of others. עַד־מָתַי, for how long, *sc.* will he be able to do this with impunity; not "how long has he already done this" (Hitzig), for the words do not express exultation at the termination of the oppression, but are a sigh appended to the woe, over the apparently interminable plunderings on the part of the Chaldæan. וּמַכְבִּיד is also dependent upon *hōi*, since the defined participle which stands at the head of the cry of woe is generally followed by participles undefined, as though the former regulated the whole (cf. Isa. v. 20 and x. 1). At the same time, it might be taken as a simple declaration in itself, though still standing under the influence of the *hōi*; in which case הוּא would have to be supplied in thought, like וְחוֹטֵא in ver. 10. And even in this instance the sentence is not subordinate to the preceding one, as Luther follows Rashi in assuming ("and still only heaps much slime upon

himself"); but is co-ordinate, as the parallelism of the clauses and the meaning of עַבְטִים require. The *ἁπ. λεγ.* עַבְטִים is probably chosen on account of the resemblance in sound to מַכְבִּיד, whilst it also covers an enigma or *double entendre*. Being formed from עָבַט (to give a pledge) by the repetition of the last radical, עַבְטִים signifies the mass of pledges (*pignorum captorum copia:* Ges., Maurer, Delitzsch), not the load of guilt, either in a literal or a tropico-moral sense. The quantity of foreign property which the Chaldæan has accumulated is represented as a heavy mass of pledges, which he has taken from the nations like an unmerciful usurer (Deut. xxiv. 10), to point to the fact that he will be compelled to disgorge them in due time. הִכְבִּיד, to make heavy, *i.e.* to lay a heavy load upon a person. The word עַבְטִים, however, might form two words so far as the sound is concerned: עַב טִיט, cloud (*i.e.* mass) of dirt, which will cause his ruin as soon as it is discharged. This is the sense in which the Syriac has taken the word; and Jerome does the same, observing, *considera quam eleganter multiplicatas divitias densum appellaverit lutum*, no doubt according to a Jewish tradition, since Kimchi, Rashi, and Ab. Ezra take the word as a composite one, and merely differ as to the explanation of עַב. Grammatically considered, this explanation is indeed untenable, since the Hebrew language has formed no appellative *nomina composita;* but the word is nevertheless enigmatical, because, when heard from the lips, it might be taken as two words, and understood in the sense indicated. In ver. 7 the threatening *hōi* is still further developed. Will not thy biters arise? נֹשְׁכֶיךָ = נֹשְׁכִים אֹתָךְ, those who bite thee. In the description here given of the enemy as savage vipers (cf. Jer. viii. 17) there is also an enigmatical *double entendre*, which Delitzsch has admirably interpreted thus: "הַמַּרְבֶּה," he says, "pointed to תַּרְבִּית (interest). The latter, favoured by the idea of the Chaldæan as an unmerciful usurer, which is concentrated in עַבְטִים, points to נֶשֶׁךְ, which is frequently connected with תַּרְבִּית, and signifies usurious interest; and this again to the striking epithet נֹשְׁכִים, which is applied to those who have to inflict the divine retribution upon the Chaldæan. The prophet selected this to suggest the thought that there would come upon the Chaldæan those who would demand back with interest (*neshek*) the capital of which he had unrighteously

taken possession, just as he had unmercifully taken the goods of the nations from them by usury and pawn." יָקֻצוּ, from יָקַץ, they will awake, viz. מְזַעְזְעֶיךָ, those who shake or rouse thee up. זעזע, *pilel* of זוּעַ, *σείω*, is used in Arabic of the wind (to shake the tree); hence, as in this case, it was employed to denote shaking up or scaring away from a possession, as is often done, for example, by a creditor (Hitzig, Delitzsch). מְשִׁסּוֹת is an intensive plural.

So far as this threat applies to the Chaldæans, it was executed by the Medes and Persians, who destroyed the Chaldæan empire. But the threat has a much more extensive application. This is evident, apart from other proofs, from ver. 8 itself, according to which the whole of the remnant of the nations is to inflict the retribution. *Gōyīm rabbīm*, "many nations:" this is not to be taken as an antithesis to *kol-haggōyīm* (all nations) in ver. 5*b*, since "all nations" are simply many nations, as *kol* is not to be taken in its absolute sense, but simply in a relative sense, as denoting all the nations that lie within the prophet's horizon, as having entered the arena of history. Through יְשָׁלּוּךָ, which is placed at the head of the concluding clause without a copula, the antithesis to שְׁלוֹתָ is sharply brought out, and the idea of the righteous retaliation distinctly expressed. כָּל־יֶתֶר עַמִּים, the whole remnant of the nations, is not all the rest, with the exception of the one Chaldæan, for *yether* always denotes the remnant which is left after the deduction of a portion; nor does it mean all the rest of the nations, who are spared and not subjugated, in distinction from the plundered and subjugated nations, as Hitzig with many others imagine, and in proof of which he adduces the fact that the overthrow of the Chaldæans was effected by nations that had not been subdued. But, as Delitzsch has correctly observed, this view makes the prophet contradict not only himself, but the whole of the prophetic view of the world-wide dominion of Nebuchadnezzar. According to ver. 5*b*, the Chaldæan has grasped to himself the dominion over all nations, and consequently there cannot be any nations left that he has not plundered. Moreover, the Chaldæan, or Nebuchadnezzar as the head of the Chaldæan kingdom, appears in prophecy (Jer. xxvii. 7, 8), as he does in history (Dan. ii. 38, iii. 31, v. 19) throughout, as the ruler of the world in the highest sense, who

has subjugated all nations and kingdoms round about, and compelled them to serve him. These nations include the Medes and Elamites (= Persians), to whom the future conquest of Babylon is attributed in Isa. xiii. 17, xxi. 2, Jer. li. 11, 28. They are both mentioned in Jer. xxv. 25 among the nations, to whom the prophet is to reach the cup of wrath from the hand of Jehovah; and the kingdom of Elam especially is threatened in Jer. xlix. 34 sqq. with the destruction of its power, and dispersion to all four winds. In these two prophecies, indeed, Nebuchadnezzar is not expressly mentioned by name as the executor of the judgment of wrath; but in Jer. xxv. this may plainly be inferred from the context, partly from the fact that, according to ver. 9, Judah with its inhabitants, and all nations round about, are to be given into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, and partly from the fact that in the list of the nations enumerated in vers. 18–26*a* the king of Sesach (*i.e.* Babel) is mentioned as he who is to drink the cup "after them" (ver. 26*b*). The expression *'achărēhem* (after them) shows very clearly that the judgment upon the nations previously mentioned, and therefore also upon the kings of Elam and Media, is to occur while the Chaldæan rule continues, *i.e.* is to be executed by the Chaldæans. This may, in fact, be inferred, so far as the prophecy respecting Elam in Jer. xlix. 34 sqq. is concerned, from the circumstance that Jeremiah's prophecies with regard to foreign nations in Jer. xlvi.–li. are merely expansions of the summary announcement in ch. xxv. 19–26, and is also confirmed by Ezek. xxxii. 24, inasmuch as Elam is mentioned there immediately after Asshur in the list of kings and nations that have sunk to the lower regions before Egypt. And if even this prophecy has a much wider meaning, like that concerning Elam in Jer. xlix. 34, and the elegy over Egypt, which Ezekiel strikes up, is expanded into a threatening prophecy concerning the heathen generally (see Kliefoth, *Ezech.* p. 303), this further reference presupposes the historical fulfilment which the threatening words of prophecy have received through the judgment inflicted by the Chaldæans upon all the nations mentioned, and has in this its real foundation and soil.

History also harmonizes with this prophetic announcement. The arguments adduced by Hävernick (*Daniel*, p. 547 sqq.)

to prove that Nebuchadnezzar did not extend his conquests to Elam, and neither subdued this province nor Media, are not conclusive. The fact that after the fall of Nineveh the conquerors, Nabopolassar of Babylonia, and Cyaxares the king of Media, divided the fallen Assyrian kingdom between them, the former receiving the western provinces, and the latter the eastern, does not preclude the possibility of Nebuchadnezzar, the founder of the Chaldæan empire, having made war upon the Median kingdom, and brought it into subjection. There is no historical testimony, however, to the further assertion, that Nebuchadnezzar was only concerned to extend his kingdom towards the west, that his conquests were all of them in the lands situated there, and gave him so much to do that he could not possibly think of extending his eastern frontier. It is true that the opposite of this cannot be inferred from Strabo, xvi. 1, 18;[1] but it may be inferred, as M. v. Niebuhr (*Gesch. Assurs*, pp. 211–12) has said, from the fact that according to Jer. xxvii. and xxviii., at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign, and therefore not very long after Nebuchadnezzar had conquered Jerusalem in the time of Jehoiachin, and restored order in southern Syria in the most energetic manner, the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Zidon, entered into negotiations with Zedekiah for a joint expedition against Nebuchadnezzar. M. v. Niebuhr infers from this that troublous times set in at that period for Nebuchadnezzar, and that this sudden change in the situation of affairs was connected with the death of Cyaxares, and leads to the conjecture that Nebuchadnezzar, who had sworn fealty to Cyaxares, refused at his death to do homage to his successor; for fidelity to a father-in-law, with whose help the kingdom was founded, would assume a very different character if it was renewed to his successor. Babel was too powerful to accept any such enfeoffment as this. And even if Nebuchadnezzar was not a vassal, there could not be a more suitable opportunity for war with Media than that afforded

[1] This passage is quoted by Hitzig (*Ezech.* p. 251) as a proof that Elam made war upon the Babylonians, and, indeed, judging from Jer. xlix. 34, an unsuccessful war. But Strabo speaks of a war between the Elymæans (Elamites) and the Babylonians and Susians, which M. v. Niebuhr (p. 210) very properly assigns to the period of the alliance between Media (as possessor of Susa) and Babylon.

by a change of government, since kingdoms in the East are so easily shaken by the death of a great prince. And there certainly was no lack of inducement to enter upon a war with Media. Elam, for example, from its very situation, and on account of the restlessness of its inhabitants, must have been a constant apple of discord. This combination acquires extreme probability, partly from the fact that Jeremiah's prophecy concerning Elam, in which that nation is threatened with the destruction of its power and dispersion to all four winds, was first uttered at the commencement of Zedekiah's reign (Jer. xlix. 34), whereas the rest of his prophecies against foreign nations date from an earlier period, and that against Babel is the only one which falls later, namely, in the fourth year of Zedekiah (Jer. li. 59), which appears to point to the fact that at the commencement of Zedekiah's reign things were brewing in Elam which might lead to his ruin. And it is favoured in part by the account in the book of Judith of a war between Nabuchodonosor (Nebuchadnezzar) and Media, which terminated victoriously according to the *Rec. vulg.* in the twelfth year of his reign, since this account is hardly altogether a fictitious one. These prophetic and historical testimonies may be regarded as quite sufficient, considering the universally scanty accounts of the Chaldæan monarchy given by the Greeks and Romans, to warrant us in assuming without hesitation, as M. v. Niebuhr has done, that between the ninth and twentieth years of Nebuchadnezzar's reign—namely, at the commencement of Zedekiah's reign—the former had to make war not only with Elam, but with Media also, and that it is to this eastern war that we should have to attribute the commotion in Syria.

From all this we may see that there is no necessity to explain "all the remnant of the nations" as relating to the remainder of the nations that had not been subjugated, but that we may understand it as signifying the remnant of the nations plundered and subjugated by the Chaldæans (as is done by the LXX., Theodoret, Delitzsch, and others), which is the only explanation in harmony with the usage of the language. For in Josh. xxiii. 12 *yether haggōyīm* denotes the Canaanitish nations left after the war of extermination; and in Zech. xiv. 2 *yether hâ'âm* signifies the remnant of the nation left after the previous conquest of the city, and the carrying

away of half its inhabitants. In Zeph. ii. 9 *yether gōi* is synonymous with שְׁאֵרִית עַמִּי, and our יֶתֶר עַמִּים is equivalent to שְׁאֵרִית הַגּוֹיִם in Ezek. xxxvi. 3, 4. מִדְמֵי אָדָם: on account of the human blood unjustly shed, and on account of the wickedness on the earth (*chămas* with the gen. obj. as in Joel iv. 19 and Ob. 10). *'Erets* without an article is not the holy land, but the earth generally; and so the city (*qiryâh*, which is still dependent upon *chămas*) is not Jerusalem, nor any one particular city, but, with indefinite generality, "cities." The two clauses are parallel, cities and their inhabitants corresponding to men and the earth. The Chaldæan is depicted as one who gathers men and nations in his net (ch. i. 14–17). And so in Jer. l. 23 he is called a hammer of the whole earth, in li. 7 a cup of reeling, and in li. 25 the destroyer of the whole earth.

Vers. 9–11. The second woe is pronounced upon the wickedness of the Chaldæan, in establishing for himself a permanent settlement through godless gain. Ver. 9. "*Woe to him who getteth a godless gain for his house, to set his nest on high, to save himself from the hand of calamity.* Ver. 10. *Thou hast consulted shame to thy house, destruction of many nations, and involvest thy soul in guilt.* Ver. 11. *For the stone out of the wall will cry, and the spar out of the wood will answer it.*" To the Chaldæan's thirst for robbery and plunder there is attached quite simply the base avarice through which he seeks to procure strength and durability for his house. בֹּצֵעַ בָּצַע, to get gain, has in itself the subordinate idea of unrighteous gain or sinful covetousness, since בָּצַע denotes cutting or breaking something off from another's property, though here it is still further strengthened by the predicate רָע, evil (gain). בֵּיתוֹ (his house) is not the palace, but the royal house of the Chaldæan, his dynasty, as ver. 10 clearly shows, where בַּיִת evidently denotes the king's family, including the king himself. How far he makes בָּצַע for his family, is more precisely defined by לָשׂוּם וגו'. קִנּוֹ, his (the Chaldæan's) nest, is neither his capital nor his palace or royal castle; but the setting up of his nest on high is a figure denoting the founding of his government, and securing it against attacks. As the eagle builds its nest on high, to protect it from harm (cf. Job xxxix. 27), so does the Chaldæan seek to elevate and strengthen his rule by robbery and plunder, that it may never be wrested from his family

again. We might here think of the buildings erected by Nebuchadnezzar for the fortification of Babylon, and also of the building of the royal palace (see Berosus in *Jos. c. Ap.* i. 19). We must not limit the figurative expression to this, however, but must rather refer it to all that the Chaldæan did to establish his rule. This is called the setting on high of his nest, to characterize it as an emanation from his pride, and the lofty thoughts of his heart. For the figure of the nest, see Num. xxiv. 21, Ob. 4, Jer. xlix. 16. His intention in doing this is to save himself from the hand of adversity. רָע is not masculine, the evil man; but neuter, adversity, or "the hostile fate, which, so far as its ultimate cause is God (Isa. xlv. 7), is inevitable and irreversible" (Delitzsch). In ver. 10 the result of his heaping up of evil gain is announced: he has consulted shame to his house. יָעַץ, to form a resolution. His determination to establish his house, and make it firm and lofty by evil gain, will bring shame to his house, and instead of honour and lasting glory, only shame and ruin. קְצוֹת, which has been variously rendered, cannot be the plural of the noun קָצֶה, "the ends of many nations," since it is impossible to attach any intelligent meaning to this. It is rather the infinitive of the verb קָצָה, the occurrence of which Hitzig can only dispute by an arbitrary alteration of the text in four different passages, and is equivalent to קָצַץ, to cut off, hew off, which occurs in the *piel* in 2 Kings x. 32 and Prov. xxvi. 6, but in the *kal* only here. The infinitive construct does not stand for the inf. abs., or for לְקְצוֹת, *excindendo*, but is used substantively, and is governed by יָעַצְתָּ, which still retains its force from the previous clause. Thou hast consulted (resolved upon) the cutting off, or destruction, of many nations. וְחוֹטֵא, and sinnest against thy soul thereby, *i.e.* bringest retribution upon thyself, throwest away thine own life. On the use of the participle in the sense of the second person without אַתָּה, see at ch. i. 5. חָטָא, with the accusative of the person, as in Prov. xx. 2 and viii. 36, instead of חָטָא בְנַפְשׁוֹ. The participle is used, because the reference is to a present, which will only be completed in the future (Hitzig and Delitzsch). The reason for this verdict, and also for the *hōi* which stands at the head of this strophe, follows in ver. 11. The stone out of the wall and the spar out of the woodwork will cry, *sc.* because of the wickedness

which thou hast practised in connection with thy buildings (ch. i. 2), or for vengeance (Gen. iv. 10), because they have been stolen, or obtained from stolen property. The apparently proverbial expression of the crying of stones is applied in a different way in Luke xix. 40. קִיר does not mean the wall of a room here, but, as distinguished from עֵץ, the outside wall, and עֵץ, the woodwork or beams of the buildings. The *ἅπ. λεγ.* בַּפִּים, lit. that which binds, from כפם in the Syriac and Targum, to bind, is, according to Jerome, "the beam which is placed in the middle of any building to hold the walls together, and is generally called *ἁμάντωσις* by the Greeks." The explanation given by Suidas is, *δέσις ξύλων ἐμβαλλομένων ἐν τοῖς οἰκοδομήσασι*, hence rafters or beams. יַעֲנֶנָּה, will answer, *sc.* the stone, *i.e.* join in its crying (cf. Isa. xxxiv. 14).

Vers. 12–14. The third woe refers to the building of cities with the blood and property of strangers. Ver. 12. "*Woe to him who buildeth cities with blood, and foundeth castles with injustice.* Ver. 13. *Is it not, behold, from Jehovah of hosts that the peoples weary themselves for fire, and nations exhaust themselves for vanity?* Ver. 14. *For the earth will be filled with knowledge of the glory of Jehovah, as the waters cover the sea.*" The earnest endeavour of the Chaldæan to found his dynasty in permanency through evil gain, manifested itself also in the building of cities with the blood and sweat of the subjugated nations. עִיר and קִרְיָה are synonymous, and are used in the singular with indefinite generality, like קִרְיָה in ver. 8. The preposition ב, attached to דָּמִים and עַוְלָה, denotes the means employed to attain the end, as in Mic. iii. 10 and Jer. xxii. 13. This was murder, bloodshed, transportation, and tyranny of every kind. *Kōnēn* is not a participle with the *Mem* dropped, but a perfect; the address, which was opened with a participle, being continued in the finite tense (cf. Ewald, § 350, *a*). With ver. 13 the address takes a different turn from that which it has in the preceding woes. Whereas there the woe is always more fully expanded in the central verse by an exposition of the wrong, we have here a statement that it is of Jehovah, *i.e.* is ordered or inflicted by Him, that the nations weary themselves for the fire. The ו before יִיגְעוּ introduces the declaration of what it is that comes from Jehovah. הֲלוֹא הִנֵּה (is it not? behold!) are connected together, as in 2 Chron. xxv. 26,

to point to what follows as something great that was floating before the mind of the prophet. בְּרִי אֵשׁ, literally, for the need of the fire (compare Nah. ii. 13 and Isa. xl. 16). They labour for the fire, *i.e.* that the fire may devour the cities that have been built with severe exertion, which exhausts the strength of the nations. So far they weary themselves for vanity, since the buildings are one day to fall into ruins, or be destroyed. Jeremiah (li. 58) has very suitably applied these words to the destruction of Babylon. This wearying of themselves for vanity is determined by Jehovah, for (ver. 14) the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah. That this may be the case, the kingdom of the world, which is hostile to the Lord and His glory, must be destroyed. This promise therefore involves a threat directed against the Chaldæan. His usurped glory shall be destroyed, that the glory of Jehovah of Sabaoth, *i.e.* of the God of the universe, may fill the whole earth. The thought in ver. 14 is formed after Isa. xi. 9, with trifling alterations, partly substantial, partly only formal. The choice of the *niphal* תִּמָּלֵא instead of the מָלְאָה of Isaiah refers to the actual fact, and is induced in both passages by the different turn given to the thought. In Isaiah, for example, this thought closes the description of the glory and blessedness of the Messianic kingdom in its perfected state. The earth is then full of the knowledge of the Lord, and the peace throughout all nature which has already been promised is one fruit of that knowledge. In Habakkuk, on the other hand, this knowledge is only secured through the overthrow of the kingdom of the world, and consequently only thereby will the earth be filled with it, and that not with the knowledge of Jehovah (as in Isaiah), but with the knowledge of His glory (כְּבוֹד יי), which is manifested in the judgment and overthrow of all ungodly powers (Isa. ii. 12–21, vi. 3, compared with the primary passage, Num. xiv. 21). כְּבוֹד יי is "the δόξα of Jehovah, which includes His right of majesty over the whole earth" (Delitzsch). יְכַסּוּ עַל־יָם is altered in form, but not in sense, from the לַיָּם מְכַסִּים of Isaiah; and יְכַסּוּ is to be taken relatively, since כְּ is only used as a preposition before a noun or participle, and not like a conjunction before a whole sentence (comp. Ewald, § 360, *a*, with § 337, *c*). לָדַעַת is an infinitive, not a noun, with the preposition ל; for מָלְאָ, יִמָּלְאָ, is construed with the *accus. rei*, lit. the

earth will be filled with the acknowledging. The water of the sea is a figure denoting overflowing abundance.

Vers. 15–17. The fourth woe is an exclamation uttered concerning the cruelty of the Chaldæan in the treatment of the conquered nations. Ver. 15. "*Woe to him that giveth his neighbour to drink, mixing thy burning wrath, and also making drunk, to look at their nakedness.* Ver. 16. *Thou hast satisfied thyself with shame instead of with honour; then drink thou also, and show the foreskin. The cup of Jehovah's right hand will turn to thee, and the vomiting of shame upon thy glory.* Ver. 17. *For the wickedness at Lebanon will cover thee, and the dispersion of the animals which frightened them; for the blood of the men and the wickedness on the earth, upon the city and all its inhabitants.*" The description in vers. 15 and 16 is figurative, and the figure is taken from ordinary life, where one man gives another drink, so as to intoxicate him, for the purpose of indulging his own wantonness at his expense, or taking delight in his shame. This helps to explain the מַשְׁקֵה רֵעֵהוּ, who gives his neighbour to drink. The singular is used with indefinite generality, or in a collective, or speaking more correctly, a distributive sense. The next two circumstantial clauses are subordinate to הוֹי מַשְׁקֵה, defining more closely the mode of the drinking. סְפֵּחַ does not mean to pour in, after the Arabic سفح; for this, which is another form for سفك, answers to the Hebrew שָׁפַךְ, to pour out (compare שָׁפַךְ חֲמָתוֹ, to pour out, or empty out His wrath: Ps. lxxix. 6; Jer. x. 25), but has merely the meaning to add or associate, with the sole exception of Job xiv. 19, where it is apparently used to answer to the Arabic سفح; consequently here, where drink is spoken of, it means to mix wrath with the wine poured out. Through the suffix חֲמָתְךָ the woe is addressed directly to the Chaldæan himself,—a change from the third person to the second, which would be opposed to the genius of our language. The thought is sharpened by וְאַף שַׁכֵּר, "and also (in addition) making drunk" (*shakkēr*, inf. abs.). To look upon their nakednesses: the plural מְעוֹרֵיהֶם is used because רֵעֵהוּ has a collective meaning. The prostrate condition of the drunken man is a figurative representation of the overthrow of a conquered nation (Nah. iii. 11), and the uncovering of the shame a figure denoting the

ignominy that has fallen upon it (Nah. iii. 5; Isa. xlvii. 3). This allegory, in which the conquest and subjugation of the nations are represented as making them drink of the cup of wrath, does not refer to the open violence with which the Chaldæan enslaves the nations, but points to the artifices with which he overpowers them, "the cunning with which he entices them into his alliance, to put them to shame" (Delitzsch). But he has thereby simply prepared shame for himself, which will fall back upon him (ver. 16). The perfect שָׂבַעְתָּ does not apply prophetically to the certain future; but, as in the earlier strophes (vers. 8 and 10) which are formed in a similar manner, to what the Chaldæan has done, to bring upon himself the punishment mentioned in what follows. The shame with which he has satisfied himself is the shamefulness of his conduct; and שָׂבַע, to satisfy himself, is equivalent to revelling in shame. מִכָּבוֹד, far away from honour, *i.e.* and not in honour. מִן is the negative, as in Ps. lii. 5, in the sense of וְלֹא, with which it alternates in Hos. vi. 6. For this he is now also to drink the cup of wrath, so as to fall down intoxicated, and show himself as having a foreskin, *i.e.* as uncircumcised (הֶעָרֵל from עָרְלָה). This goblet Jehovah will hand to him. *Tissōbb*, he will turn, עַל (upon thee, or to thee). This is said, because the cup which the Chaldæan had reached to other nations was also handed over to him by Jehovah. The nations have hitherto been obliged to drink it out of the hand of the Chaldæan. Now it is his turn, and he must drink it out of the hand of Jehovah (see Jer. xxv. 26). וְקִיקְלוֹן, and shameful vomiting, (*sc.* יִהְיֶה) will be over thine honour, *i.e.* will cover over thine honour or glory, *i.e.* will destroy thee. The ἅπ. λεγ. קִיקְלוֹן is formed from the *pilpal* קלקל from קלל, and softened down from קַלְקָלוֹן, and signifies extreme or the greatest contempt. This form of the word, however, is chosen for the sake of the play upon קִיא קְלוֹן, vomiting of shame, *vomitus ignominiæ* (Vulg.; cf. קִיא צֹאָה in Isa. xxviii. 8), and in order that, when the word was heard, it should call up the subordinate meaning, which suggests itself the more naturally, because excessive drinking is followed by vomiting (cf. Jer. xxv. 26, 27). This threat is explained in ver. 17, in the statement that the wickedness practised by the Chaldæan on Lebanon and its beasts will cover or fall back upon itself. Lebanon with its beasts is taken by

most commentators allegorically, as a figurative representation of the holy land and its inhabitants. But although it may be pleaded, in support of this view, that Lebanon, and indeed the summit of its cedar forest, is used in Jer. xxii. 6 as a symbol of the royal family of Judæa, and in Jer. xxii. 23 as a figure denoting Jerusalem, and that in Isa. xxxvii. 24, and probably also in Zech. xi. 1, the mountains of Lebanon, as the northern frontier of the Israelitish land, are mentioned synecdochically for the land itself, and the hewing of its cedars and cypresses may be a figurative representation of the devastation of the land and its inhabitants; these passages do not, for all that, furnish any conclusive evidence of the correctness of this view, inasmuch as in Isa. x. 33, 34, Lebanon with its forest is also a figure employed to denote the grand Assyrian army and its leaders, and in Isa. lx. 13 is a symbol of the great men of the earth generally; whilst in the verse before us, the allusion to the Israelitish land and nation is neither indicated, nor even favoured, by the context of the words. Apart, for example, from the fact that such a thought as this, "the wickedness committed upon the holy land will cover thee, because of the wickedness committed upon the earth," not only appears lame, but would be very difficult to sustain on biblical grounds, inasmuch as the wickedness committed upon the earth and its inhabitants would be declared to be a greater crime than that committed upon the land and people of the Lord; this view does not answer to the train of thought in the whole of the ode, since the previous strophes do not contain any special allusion to the devastation of the holy land, or the subjugation and ill-treatment of the holy people, but simply to the plundering of many nations, and the gain forced out of their sweat and blood, as being the great crime of the Chaldæan (cf. vers. 8, 10, 13), for which he would be visited with retribution and destruction. Consequently we must take the words literally, as referring to the wickedness practised by the Chaldæan upon nature and the animal world, as the glorious creation of God, represented by the cedars and cypresses of Lebanon, and the animals living in the forests upon those mountains. Not satisfied with robbing men and nations, and with oppressing and ill-treating them, the Chaldæan committed wickedness upon the cedars and cypresses also, and the wild animals of Lebanon,

cutting down the wood either for military purposes or for state buildings, so that the wild animals were unsparingly exterminated. There is a parallel to this in Isa. xiv. 8, where the cypresses and cedars of Lebanon rejoice at the fall of the Chaldæan, because they will be no more hewn down. *Shōd b'hēmōth*, devastation upon (among) the animals (with the *gen. obj.*, as in Isa. xxii. 4 and Ps. xii. 6). יְחִיתָן is a relative clause, and the subject, *shōd*, the devastation which terrified the animals. The form יְחִיתָן for יְחַתֵּן, from יָחֵת, *hiphil* of חָתַת, is anomalous, the syllable with *dagesh* being resolved into an extended one, like הֲתִימֹךְ for הֲתַמֵּךְ in Isa. xxxiii. 1; and the *tsere* of the final syllable is exchanged for *pathach* because of the pause, as, for example, in הִתְעַלָּם in Ps. lv. 2 (see Olshausen, *Gramm.* p. 576). There is no necessity to alter it into יְחִיתֵךְ (Ewald and Olshausen after the LXX., Syr., and Vulg.), and it only weakens the idea of the *talio*. The second hemistich is repeated as a refrain from ver. 8*b*.

Vers. 18–20. Fifth and last strophe.—Ver. 18. "*What profiteth the graven image, that the maker thereof hath carved it; the molten image and the teacher of lies, that the maker of his image trusteth in him to make dumb idols?* Ver. 19. *Woe to him that saith to the wood, Wake up; Awake, to the hard stone. Should it teach? Behold, it is encased in gold and silver, and there is nothing of breath in its inside.* Ver. 20. *But Jehovah is in His holy temple: let all the world be silent before Him.*" This concluding strophe does not commence, like the preceding ones, with *hōi*, but with the thought which prepares the way for the *woe*, and is attached to what goes before to strengthen the threat, all hope of help being cut off from the Chaldæan. Like all the rest of the heathen, the Chaldæan also trusted in the power of his gods. This confidence the prophet overthrows in ver. 18: "What use is it?" equivalent to "The idol is of no use" (cf. Jer. ii. 11; Isa. xliv. 9, 10). The force of this question still continues in *massēkhâh*: "Of what use is the molten image?" *Pesel* is an image carved out of wood or stone; *massēkhâh* an image cast in metal. הוֹעִיל is the perfect, expressing a truth founded upon experience, as a fact: What profit has it ever brought? *Mōreh sheqer* (the teacher of lies) is not the priest or prophet of the idols, after the analogy of Mic. iii. 11 and Isa. ix. 14; for that would not suit the following explana-

tory clause, in which עָלָיו (in him) points back to *môreh sheqer:* "that the maker of idols trusteth in him (the teacher of lies)." Consequently the *môreh sheqer* must be the idol itself; and it is so designated in contrast with the true God, the teacher in the highest sense (cf. Job xxxvi. 22). The idol is a teacher of lying, inasmuch as it sustains the delusion, partly by itself and partly through its priests, that it is God, and can do what men expect from God; whereas it is nothing more than a dumb nonentity (*'elîl 'illēm:* compare εἴδωλα ἄφωνα, 1 Cor. xii. 2). Therefore woe be to him who expects help from such lifeless wood or image of stone. עֵץ is the block of wood shaped into an idol. *Hâqîtsâh*, awake! *sc.* to my help, as men pray to the living God (Ps. xxxv. 23, xliv. 24, lix. 6; Isa. li. 9). הוּא יוֹרֶה is a question of astonishment at such a delusion. This is required by the following sentence: it is even encased in gold. *Tâphas:* generally to grasp; here to set in gold, to encase in gold plate (*zâhâbh* is an accusative). בְּלֹ אֵין: there is not at all. רוּחַ, breath, the spirit of life (cf. Jer. x. 14). Vers. 18 and 19 contain a concise summary of the reproaches heaped upon idolatry in Isa. xliv. 9–20; but they are formed quite independently, without any evident allusions to that passage. In ver. 20 the contrast is drawn between the dumb lifeless idols and the living God, who is enthroned in His holy temple, *i.e.* not the earthly temple at Jerusalem, but the heavenly temple, or the temple as the throne of the divine glory (Isa. lxvi. 1), as in Mic. i. 2, whence God will appear to judge the world, and to manifest His holiness upon the earth, by the destruction of the earthly powers that rise up against Him. This thought is implied in the words, "He is in His holy temple," inasmuch as the holy temple is the palace in which He is enthroned as Lord and Ruler of the whole world, and from which He observes the conduct of men (Ps. xi. 4). Therefore the whole earth, *i.e.* all the population of the earth, is to be still before Him, *i.e.* to submit silently to Him, and wait for His judgment. Compare Zeph. i. 7 and Zech. ii. 17, where the same command is borrowed from this passage, and referred to the expectation of judgment. הַס is hardly an *imper. apoc.* of הָסָה, but an interjection, from which the verb *hâsâh* is formed. But if the whole earth must keep silence when He appears as Judge, it is all over with the Chaldæan also, with all his glory and might.

PRAYER FOR COMPASSION IN THE MIDST OF THE JUDGMENT.—CHAP. III.

In this chapter, which is called a prayer in the heading, the prophet expresses the feelings which the divine revelation of judgment described in ch. i. and ii. had excited in his mind, and ought to excite in the congregation of believers, so that this supplicatory psalm may be called an echo of the two answers which the prophet had received from the Lord to his complaints in ch. i. 2–4 and 12–17 (*vid.* ch. i. 5–11 and ii. 2–20). Deeply agitated as he was by the revelation he had received concerning the terrible judgment, which the Lord would execute first of all upon Judah, through the wild and cruel Chaldæan nation, and then upon the Chaldæan himself, because he deified his own power, the prophet prays to the Lord that He will carry out this work of His "within years," and in the revelation of His wrath still show mercy (ver. 2). He then proceeds in vers. 3–15 to depict in a majestic theophany the coming of the Lord to judge the world, and bring salvation to His people and His anointed; and secondly, in vers. 16–19, to describe the fruit of faith which this divine manifestation produces, namely, first of all fear and trembling at the day of tribulation (vers. 16, 17), and afterwards joy and rejoicing in the God of salvation (vers. 18 and 19). Consequently we may regard ver. 2 as the theme of the psalm, which is distributed thus between the two parts. In the first part (vers. 3–15) we have the prayer for the accomplishment of the work (ver. 2*a*) announced by God in ch. i. 5, expressed in the form of a prophetico-lyric description of the coming of the Lord to judgment; and in the second part (vers. 16–19), the prayer in wrath to remember mercy (ver. 2*b*), expanded still more fully in the form of a description of the feelings and state of mind excited by that prayer in the hearts of the believing church.

The song has a special heading, after the fashion of the psalms, in which the contents, the author, and the poetical character of the ode are indicated. The contents are called *t'phillâh*, a prayer, like Ps. xvii., lxxxvi., xc., cii., and cxlii., not merely with reference to the fact that it commences with a prayer

to God, but because that prayer announces the contents of the ode after the manner of a theme, and the whole of the ode is simply the lyrical unfolding of that prayer. In order, however, to point at the same time to the prophetic character of the prayer, that it may not be regarded as a lyrical effusion of the subjective emotions, wishes, and hopes of a member of the congregation, but may be recognised as a production of the prophets, enlightened by the Spirit of Jehovah, the name of the author is given with the predicate "the prophet;" and to this there is added עַל שִׁגְיֹנוֹת, to indicate the poetico-subjective character, through which it is distinguished from prophecy in the narrower sense. The expression "upon Shigionoth" cannot refer to the contents or the object of the ode; for although *shiggâyōn*, according to its etymon *shâgâh* = *shâgag*, to transgress by mistake, to sin, might have the meaning transgression in a moral sense, and consequently might be referred to the sins of transgressors, either of the Judæans or the Chaldæans, such an assumption is opposed both to the use of *shiggâyōn* in the heading to Ps. vii., and also to the analogy between *'al shigyōnōth*, and such headings to the psalms as *'al haggittīth*, *'al n'gīnâth*, and other words introduced with *'al*. Whilst *shiggâyōn* in Ps. vii. 1 indicates the style of poetry in which the psalm is composed, all the notices in the headings to the psalms that are introduced with *'al* refer either to the melody or style in which the psalms are to be sung, or to the musical accompaniment with which they are to be introduced into the worship of God. This musico-liturgical signification is to be retained here also, since it is evident from the subscription in ver. 19, and the repetition of *Selah* three times (vers. 3, 9, 13), that our hymn was to be used with musical accompaniment. Now, as *shâgâh*, to err, then to reel to and fro, is applied to the giddiness both of intoxication and of love (Isa. xxviii. 7; Prov. xx. 1, v. 20), *shiggâyōn* signifies reeling, and in the terminology of poetry a reeling song, *i.e.* a song delivered in the greatest excitement, or with a rapid change of emotion, *dithyrambus* (see Clauss on Ps. vii. 1; Ewald, Delitzsch, and others); hence עַל שִׁגְיֹנוֹת, after dithyrambs, or "after the manner of a stormy, martial, and triumphal ode" (Schmieder).

Ver. 2. "*Jehovah, I have heard Thy tidings, am alarmed.*

Jehovah, Thy work, in the midst of the years call it to life, in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy." שִׁמְעָךְ is the tidings (ἀκοή) of God; what the prophet has heard of God, *i.e.* the tidings of the judgment which God is about to inflict upon Judah through the Chaldæans, and after that upon the Chaldæans themselves. The prophet is alarmed at this. The word יָרֵאתִי (I am alarmed) does not compel us to take what is heard as referring merely to the judgment to be inflicted upon Judah by the Chaldæans. Even in the overthrow of the mighty Chaldæan, or of the empire of the world, the omnipotence of Jehovah is displayed in so terrible a manner, that this judgment not only inspires with joy at the destruction of the foe, but fills with alarm at the omnipotence of the Judge of the world. The prayer which follows, "Call Thy work to life," also refers to this twofold judgment which God revealed to the prophet in ch. i. and ii. פָּעָלְךָ, placed absolutely at the head for the sake of emphasis, points back to the work (*pō'al*) which God was about to do (ch. i. 5); but this work of God is not limited to the raising up of the Chaldæan nation, but includes the judgment which will fall upon the Chaldæan after he has offended (ch. i. 11). This assumption is not at variance even with חַיֵּיהוּ. For the opinion that חָיָה never means to call a non-existent thing to life, but always signifies either to give life to an inorganic object (Job xxxiii. 4), or to keep a living thing alive, or (and this most frequently) to restore a dead thing to life, and that here the word must be taken in the sense of restoring to life, because in the description which follows Habakkuk looks back to Ps. lxxvii. and the *pō'al* depicted there, viz. the deliverance out of Egyptian bondage, is not correct. חָיָה does not merely mean to restore to life and keep alive, but also to give life and call to life. In Job xxxiii. 4, where תְּחַיֵּנִי is parallel [redacted] עָשָׂה, the reference is not to the impartation of life to a[redacted] object, but to the giving of life in the sense of cre[redacted]lso in Gen. vii. 3 and xix. 32, חַיָּה זֶרַע means to ca[redacted]ise it up, *i.e.* to call a non-existent thing to life. Moreover, the resemblances in the theophany depicted in what follows to Ps. lxxvii. do not require the assumption that Habakkuk is praying for the renewal of the former acts of God for the redemption of His people, but may be fully explained on the ground that the saving acts of God on behalf

of His people are essentially the same in all ages, and that the prophets generally were accustomed to describe the divine revelations of the future under the form of imagery drawn from the acts of God in the past. There is special emphasis in the use of בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים twice, and the fact that in both instances it stands at the head. It has been interpreted in very different ways; but there is an evident allusion to the divine answer in ch. ii. 3, that the oracle is for an appointed time, etc. "In the midst of the years," or within years, cannot of course mean by itself "within a certain number, or a small number, of years," or "within a brief space of time" (Ges., Ros., and Maurer); nevertheless this explanation is founded upon a correct idea of the meaning. When the prophet directs his eye to the still remote object of the oracle (ch. ii.), the fulfilment of which was to be delayed, but yet assuredly to come at last (ch. ii. 3), the interval between the present time and the *mō'ēd* appointed by God (ch. ii. 3) appears to him as a long series of years, at the end only of which the judgment is to come upon the oppressors of His people, namely the Chaldæans. He therefore prays that the Lord will not delay too long the work which He designs to do, or cause it to come to life only at the end of the appointed interval, but will bring it to life within years, *i.e.* within the years, which would pass by if the fulfilment were delayed, before that *mō'ēd* arrived. Grammatically considered, *qerebh shânīm* cannot be the centre of the years of the world, the boundary-line between the Old and New Testament æons, as Bengel supposes, who takes it at the same time, according to this explanation, as the starting-point for a chronological calculation of the whole course of the world. Moreover, it may also be justly argued, in opposition to this view and application of the words, that it cannot be presupposed that the prophets had so clear a consciousness as this, embracing all history by its calculus; and still less can we expect to find in a lyrical ode, which is the outpouring of the heart of the congregation, a revelation of what God Himself had not revealed to him according to ch. ii. 3. Nevertheless the view which lies at the foundation of this application of our passage, viz. that the work of God, for the manifestation of which the prophet is praying, falls in the centre of the years of the world, has this deep truth, that it exhibits the overthrow not only of the im-

perial power of Chaldæa, but that of the world-power generally, and the deliverance of the nation from its power, and forms the turning-point, with which the old æon closes and the new epoch of the world commences, with the completion of which the whole of the earthly development of the universe will reach its close. The repetition of בְּקֶרֶב שָׁנִים is expressive of the earnest longing with which the congregation of the Lord looks for the tribulation to end. The object to תּוֹדִיעַ, which is to be taken in an optative sense, answering to the imperative in the parallel clause, may easily be supplied from the previous clause. To the prayer for the shortening of the period of suffering there is appended, without the copula *Vav*, the further prayer, in wrath to remember mercy. The wrath (*rōgez*, like *rûgaz* in Isa. xxviii. 21 and Prov. xxix. 9) in which God is to remember mercy, namely for His people Israel, can only be wrath over Israel, not merely the wrath manifested in the chastisement of Judah through the Chaldæans, but also the wrath displayed in the overthrow of the Chaldæans. In the former case God would show mercy by softening the cruelty of the Chaldæans; in the latter, by accelerating their overthrow, and putting a speedy end to their tyranny. This prayer is followed in vers. 3–15 by a description of the work of God which is to be called to life, in which the prophet expresses confidence that his petition will be granted.

Vers. 3–15. *Coming of the Lord to judge the nations and to redeem His people.* The description of this theophany rests throughout upon earlier lyrical descriptions of the revelations of God in the earlier times of Israel. Even the introduction (ver. 3) has its roots in the song of Moses in Deut. xxxiii. 2; and in the further course of the ode we meet with various echoes of different psalms (compare ver. 6 with Ps. xviii. 8; ver. 8 with Ps. xviii. 10; ver. 19 with Ps. xviii. 33, 34; also ver. 5 with Ps. lxviii. 25; ver. 8 with Ps. lxviii. 5, 34). The points of contact in vers. 10–15 with Ps. lxxvii. 17–21, are still more marked, and are of such a kind that Habakkuk evidently had the psalm in his mind, and not the writer of the psalm the hymn of the prophet, and that the prophet has reproduced in an original manner such features of the psalm as were adapted to his purpose. This is not only generally favoured by the fact that Habakkuk's prayer is composed throughout after the

poetry of the Psalms, but still more decidedly by the circumstance that Habakkuk depicts a coming redemption under figures borrowed from that of the past, to which the singer of this psalm looks back from his own mournful times, comforting himself with the picture of the miraculous deliverance of his people out of Egypt (see Hengstenberg and Delitzsch on Ps. lxxvii.). For it is very evident that Habakkuk does not describe the mighty acts of the Lord in the olden time, in order to assign a motive for his prayer for the deliverance of Israel out of the affliction of exile which awaits it in the future, as many of the earlier commentators supposed, but that he is predicting a future appearance of the Lord to judge the nations, from the simple fact that he places the future יָבוֹא (ver. 3) at the head of the whole description, so as to determine all that follows; whilst it is placed beyond the reach of doubt by the impossibility of interpreting the theophany historically, *i.e.* as relating to an earlier manifestation of God.

Ver. 3. "*Eloah comes from Teman, and the Holy One from the mountains of Paran. Selah. His splendour covers the sky, and the earth is full of His glory.* Ver. 4. *And brightness appears like sunlight, rays are at His hand, and there His power is concealed.* Ver. 5. *Before Him goes the plague, and pestilence follows His feet.*" As the Lord God once came down to His people at Sinai, when they had been redeemed out of Egypt, to establish the covenant of His grace with them, and make them into a kingdom of God, so will He appear in the time to come in the terrible glory of His omnipotence, to liberate them from the bondage of the power of the world, and dash to pieces the wicked who seek to destroy the poor. The introduction to this description is closely connected with Deut. xxxiii. 2. As Moses depicts the appearance of the Lord at Sinai as a light shining from Seir and Paran, so does Habakkuk also make the Holy One appear thence in His glory; but apart from other differences, he changes the preterite בָּא (Jehovah came from Sinai) into the future יָבוֹא, He will come, or comes, to indicate at the very outset that he is about to describe not a past, but a future revelation of the glory of the Lord. This he sees in the form of a theophany, which is fulfilled before his mental eye; hence יָבוֹא does not describe what is future, as being absolutely so, but is something progressively unfolding itself from the

present onwards, which we should express by the present tense. The coming one is called *Eloah* (not *Jehovah*, as in Deut. xxxiii. 2, and the imitation in Judg. v. 4), a form of the name *Elohim* which only occurs in poetry in the earlier Hebrew writings, which we find for the first time in Deut. xxxii. 15, where it is used of God as the Creator of Israel, and which is also used here to designate God as the Lord and Governor of the whole world. *Eloah*, however, comes as the Holy One (*qâdôsh*), who cannot tolerate sin (ch. i. 13), and who will judge the world and destroy the sinners (vers. 12–14). As *Eloah* and *Qâdôsh* are names of one God; so "from Teman" and "from the mountain of Paran" are expressions denoting, not two starting-points, but simply two localities of one single starting-point for His appearance, like Seir and the mountains of Paran in Deut. xxxiii. 2. Instead of *Seir*, the poetical name of the mountainous country of the Edomites, *Teman*, the southern district of the Edomitish land, is used *per synecdochen* for Idumæa generally, as in Ob. 9 and Amos i. 12 (see vol. i. p. 248). The mountains of *Paran* are not the Et-Tih mountains, which bounded the desert of Paran towards the south, but the high mountain-land which formed the eastern half of that desert, and the northern portion of which is now called, after its present inhabitants, the mountains of the *Azazimeh* (see comm. on Num. x. 12). The two localities lie opposite to one another, and are only separated by the Arabah (or deep valley of the Ghor). We are not to understand the naming of these two, however, as suggesting the idea that God was coming from the Arabah, but, according to the original passage in Deut. xxxiii. 2, as indicating that the splendour of the divine appearance spread over Teman and the mountains of Paran, so that the rays were reflected from the two mountainous regions. The word *Selâh* does not form part of the subject-matter of the text, but shows that the music strikes in here when the song is used in the temple, taking up the lofty thought that God is *coming*, and carrying it out in a manner befitting the majestic appearance, in the prospect of the speedy help of the Lord. The word probably signified *elevatio*, from *sâlâh* = *sâlal*, and was intended to indicate the strengthening of the musical accompaniment, by the introduction, as is supposed, of a blast from the trumpets blown by the priests,

corresponding therefore to the musical *forte*. (For further remarks, see Hävernick's *Introduction to the Old Testament*, iii. p. 120 sqq., and Delitzsch on Ps. iii.) In ver. 3*b* the glory of the coming of God is depicted with reference to its extent, and in ver. 4 with reference to its intensive power. The whole creation is covered with its splendour. Heaven and earth reflect the glory of the coming one. הוֹדוֹ, His splendour or majesty, spreads over the whole heaven, and His glory over the earth. *T'hillâh* does not mean the praise of the earth, *i.e.* of its inhabitants, here (Chald., Ab. Ezr., Ros., and others); for there is no allusion to the manner in which the coming of God is received, and according to ver. 6 it fills the earth with trembling; but it denotes the object of the praise or fame, the glory, ἡ δόξα, like *hâdâr* in Job xl. 10, or *kâbhōd* in Isa. vi. 3, xlii. 8, and Num. xiv. 21. Grammatically considered, תְּהִלָּתוֹ is the accusative governed by מָלְאָה, and הָאָרֶץ is the subject.—Ver. 4. A splendour shines or arises like the light. תִּהְיֶה does not point back to תְּהִלָּתוֹ, "splendour like the sun will His glory be" (Hitzig); but it is the predicate to *nōgah* in the sense of to become, or to arise. הָאוֹר is the light of the sun. Like this light, or like the rising sun, when the Lord comes, there arises (spreads) a brilliant light, from which the rays emanate on its two sides. קְרָנַיִם, according to קָרַן in Ex. xxxiv. 29, 30, is to be taken in the sense of rays; and this meaning has developed itself from a comparison of the first rays of the rising sun, which shoot out above the horizon, to the horns or antlers of the gazelle, which is met with in the Arabian poets. מִיָּדוֹ, from His hand, *i.e.* since the hand is by the side, "at His side" (after the analogy of מִימִינוֹ and מִשְּׂמֹאלוֹ), and indeed "His hand" in a general sense, as signifying the hand generally, and not one single hand, equivalent therefore to "on both sides" (Delitzsch). As the disc of the sun is surrounded by a splendid radiance, so the coming of God is enclosed by rays on both sides. לוֹ refers to God. "Such a radiant splendour (קְרָנַיִם) surrounding God is presupposed when it is affirmed of Moses, that on coming from the presence of Jehovah his face was radiant, or emitted rays" (קָרַן, Ex. xxxiv. 29, 30). This interpretation of the words is established beyond all doubt, not only by the מִימִינוֹ of the original passage in Deut. xxxiii. 2, but also by the expressions

which follow in ver. 5, viz. לְפָנָיו (before him) and לְרַגְלָיו (behind him); and consequently the interpretation "rays (emanating) from His hand are to Him," with the idea that we are to think of flashes of lightning darting out of God's hand (Schnur., Ros., Hitzig, Maurer, etc.), is proved to be untenable. According to Hebrew notions, flashes of lightning do not proceed from the hand of God (in Ps. xviii. 9, which has been appealed to in support of this explanation, we have מִמֶּנּוּ); and קְרָנַיִם does not occur either in Arabic or the later Hebrew in the sense of flashes of lightning, but only in the sense of the sun's rays. וְשָׁם חֶבְיוֹן עֻזּוֹ, and there—namely, in the sun-like splendour, with the rays emanating from it—is the hiding of His omnipotence, *i.e.* the place where His omnipotence hides itself; in actual fact, the splendour forms the covering of the Almighty God at His coming, the manifestation of the essentially invisible God. The cloudy darkness is generally represented as the covering of the glory of God (Ex. xx. 21; 1 Kings viii. 12), not merely when His coming is depicted under the earthly substratum of a storm (Ps. xviii. 12, 13), but also when God was manifested in the pillar of cloud and fire (Ex. xiii. 21) on the journey of the Israelites through the desert, where it was only by night that the cloud had the appearance of fire (Num. ix. 15, 16). Here, on the contrary, the idea of the splendour of the rising sun predominates, according to which light is the garment in which God clothes Himself (Ps. civ. 2, cf. 1 Tim. vi. 16), answering to His coming as the Holy One (ver. 3). For the sun-light, in its self-illumining splendour, is the most suitable earthly element to serve as a symbol of the spotless purity of the Holy One, in whom there is no variation of light and darkness (Jas. i. 17; see at Ex. xix. 6). The alteration of וְשָׁם into וְשָׂם (he provides or contrives the concealment of His power), which Hitzig proposes after the LXX. (Aq., Symm., and Syr.), must be rejected, inasmuch as in that case the object, which he makes into the covering (cf. Ps. xviii. 12), could not be omitted; and this thought is by no means suitable here, and has merely been brought into the text on the assumption that God appears in a storm. As the Holy One, God comes to judgment upon the unholy world (ver. 5). Before Him goes *debher*, plague, and after His feet, *i.e.* behind Him, *resheph*, lit. burning heat, or a

blaze (Song of Sol. viii. 6), here the burning heat of the pestilence, fever-heat, as in Deut. xxxii. 24. Plague and pestilence, as proceeding from God, are personified and represented as satellites; the former going before Him, as it were, as a shield-bearer (1 Sam. xvii. 7), or courier (2 Sam. xv. 1); the latter coming after Him as a servant (1 Sam. xxv. 42). This verse prepares the way for the description, which commences with ver. 6, of the impression produced by the coming of God upon the world and its inhabitants.

Ver. 6. "*He stands, and sets the earth reeling: He looks, and makes nations tremble; primeval mountains burst in pieces, the early hills sink down: His are ways of the olden time.* Ver. 7: *I saw the tents of Cushan under affliction: the curtains of the land of Midian tremble.*" God coming from afar has now drawn near and taken His stand, to smite the nations as a warlike hero (cf. vers. 8, 9, and 11, 12). This is affirmed in עָמַד, He has stationed Himself, not "He steps forth or appears." This standing of Jehovah throws the earth and the nations into trembling. יְמֹדֵד cannot mean to measure here, for there is no thought of any measuring of the earth, and it cannot be shown that *mâdad* is used in the sense of measuring with the eye (Ros. and Hitzig). Moreover, the choice of the *poel*, instead of the *piel*, would still remain unexplained, and the parallelism of the clauses would be disregarded. We must therefore follow the Chaldee, Ges., Delitzsch, and others, who take מֹדֵד as the *poel* of מוּד = מוּט, to set in a reeling motion. It is only with this interpretation that the two parallel clauses correspond, in which יְתַּר, the *hiphil* of נָתַר, to cause to shake or tremble, answers to יְמֹדֵד. This explanation is also required by what follows. For just as ver. 7 unquestionably gives a further expansion of יְתַּר גּוֹיִם, so does עוֹלָם . . . יִתְפֹּצְצוּ contain the explanation of יְמֹדֵד אֶרֶץ. The everlasting hills crumble (יִתְפֹּצְצוּ from פוּץ), *i.e.* burst and resolve themselves into dust, and the hills sink down, pass away, and vanish (compare the similar description in Nahum i. 5 and Mic. i. 4). הָרְרֵי־עַד (= הָרְרֵי קֶדֶם, Deut. xxxiii. 15) in parallelism with גִּבְעוֹת עוֹלָם are the primeval mountains, as being the oldest and firmest constituents of the globe, which have existed from the beginning (מִנֵּי עֵר, Job xx. 4), and were formed at the creation of the earth (Ps. xc. 2; Job xv. 7;

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Prov. viii. 25). הֲלִיכוֹת עוֹלָם לוֹ is not to be taken relatively, and connected with what precedes, "which are the old paths," according to which the hills of God are called everlasting ways (Hitzig); because this does not yield a sense in harmony with the context. It is a substantive clause, and to be taken by itself: everlasting courses or goings are to Him, *i.e.* He now goes along, as He went along in the olden time. הֲלִיכָה, the going, advancing, or ways of God, analogous to the דֶּרֶךְ עוֹלָם, the course of the primitive world (Job xxii. 15). The prophet had Ps. lxviii. 25 floating before his mind, in which *hălīkhōth 'ĕlōhīm* denote the goings of God with His people, or the ways which God had taken from time immemorial in His guidance of them. As He once came down upon Sinai in the cloudy darkness, the thunder, lightning, and fire, to raise Israel up to be His covenant nation, so that the mountains shook (cf. Judg. v. 5); so do the mountains and hills tremble and melt away at His coming now. And as He once went before His people, and the tidings of His wondrous acts at the Red Sea threw the neighbouring nations into fear and despair (Ex. xv. 14–16); so now, when the course of God moves from Teman to the Red Sea, the nations on both sides of it are filled with terror. Of these, two are individualized in ver. 7, viz. Cushan and Midian. By *Cushan* we are not to understand the Mesopotamian king named Cushan Rishathaim, who subjugated Israel for eight years after the death of Joshua (Judg. iii. 8 sqq.); for this neither agrees with אָהֳלֵי, nor with the introduction of Midian in the parallel clause. The word is a lengthened form for *Cush*, and the name of the African Ethiopians. The *Midianites* are mentioned along with them, as being inhabitants of the Arabian coast of the Red Sea, which was opposite to them (see at Ex. ii. 15). אָהֳלֵי כִי, the tents with their inhabitants, the latter being principally intended. The same remark applies to יְרִיעוֹת, lit. the tent-curtains of the land of Midian, *i.e.* of the tents pitched in the land of Midian.

To the impression produced upon the nations by the coming of the Lord to judge the world, there is now appended in vers. 8 sqq. a description of the execution of the judgment. Ver. 8. "*Was it against rivers, O Jehovah, against the rivers that Thy wrath was kindled? that Thou ridest hither upon Thy horses, Thy chariots of salvation.* Ver. 9. *Thy bow lays itself*

bare; rods are sworn by word. Selah. Thou splittest the earth into rivers." The ode, taking a new turn, now passes from the description of the coming of God, to an address to God Himself. To the mental eye of the prophet, God presents Himself as Judge of the world, in the threatening attitude of a warlike hero equipped for conflict, so that he asks Him what is the object of His wrath. The question is merely a poetical turn given to a lively composition, which expects no answer, and is simply introduced to set forth the greatness of the wrath of God, so that in substance it is an affirmation. The wrath of God is kindled over the rivers, His fury over the sea. The first clause of the question is imperfect; Jehovah is not the subject, but a vocative, or an appeal, since *châràh*, when predicated of God, is construed with לְ. The subject follows in the double clause, into which the question divides itself, in אַפֶּךָ and עֶבְרָתֶךָ. Here the indefinite בַּנְּהָרִים is defined by בַּנְּהָרִים. *Hann'hârîm, the* rivers, are not any particular rivers, such as the arms of the Nile in Lower Egypt, or the rivers of Ethiopia, the Nile and Astaboras, the *nahărē Khūsh* (Isa. xviii. 1; Zeph. iii. 10; see Delitzsch), but the rivers of the earth generally; and "the sea" (*hayyâm*) is not the Red Sea, but the world-sea, as in Nahum i. 4 (cf. Ps. lxxxix. 10, Job xxxviii. 8). It is true that this description rests upon the two facts of the miraculous dividing of the Red Sea and of the Jordan (Ex. xv. 18; Ps. cxiv. 3, 5); but it rises far above these to a description of God as the Judge of the world, who can smite in His wrath not only the sea of the world, but all the rivers of the earth. עֶבְרָה is stronger than אַף, the wrath which passes over, or breaks through every barrier. *Kī, quod*, explaining and assigning the reason for the previous question. The riding upon horses is not actual riding, but driving in chariots with horses harnessed to them, as the explanatory words "thy chariots" (מַרְכְּבֹתֶיךָ) clearly shows, and as *râkhabh* (to ride) always signifies when predicated of God (cf. Deut. xxxiii. 26, Ps. lxviii. 34, civ. 3). *Y'shūʿâh* is governed by *mark'bhōthekhâ*, with the freedom of construction allowed in poetry, as in 2 Sam. xxii. 33, Ps. lxxi. 7, whereas in prose the noun is generally repeated in the construct state (*vid.* Gen. xxxvii. 23, and Ewald, § 291, *b*). *Y'shūʿâh* signifies salvation, even in this case, and not victory,—a meaning which it never has, and which

is all the more inapplicable here, because *y'shū'âh* is interpreted in ver. 13 by לִישָׁע. By describing the chariots of God as chariots of salvation, the prophet points at the outset to the fact, that the riding of God has for its object the salvation or deliverance of His people.—Ver. 9. God has already made bare the bow, to shoot His arrows at the foe. תֵּעוֹר, third pers. imperf. *niph.* of עור, equivalent to עָרַר (Isa. xxxii. 11), and the more usual עָרָה, to be naked. To strengthen the thought, the noun עֶרְיָה is written before the verb instead of the inf. abs. (cf. Mic. i. 11). The bow is made bare, not by the shooting of the arrows, but by its covering (*γωρυτός*, *corytus*) being removed, in order to use it as a weapon. The reference is to the bow used in war, which God carries as a warrior; so that we are not to think of the rainbow, even if the chariots might be understood as signifying the clouds, as in Isa. xix. 1 and Ps. civ. 3, since the rainbow is a sign of peace and of the covenant, whereas God is represented as attacking His enemies. The next clause, שְׁבֻעוֹת מַטּוֹת אֹמֶר, is very obscure, and has not yet been satisfactorily explained. Of the two meanings which may be given to *mattōth*, viz. branches, rods, or staffs, and tribes of the people of Israel, the latter can hardly be thought of here, since *mattōth* would certainly have been defined by either a suffix or some determining clause, if the tribes of Israel were intended. On the other hand, the meaning staffs or sticks is very naturally suggested both by the context—viz. the allusion to the war-bow—and also by ver. 14, where *mattīm* unquestionably signifies staves or lances. At the same time, the meaning spears or darts cannot be deduced from either ver. 14 or 2 Sam. xviii. 14. In both passages the meaning staves, used as lances or weapons, is quite sufficient. *Matteh*, a stick or staff with which blows were struck, might stand, as an instrument of chastisement, for the punishment or chastisement itself (cf. Isa. ix. 3, x. 5), and in Mic. vi. 9 it denotes the rod. שְׁבֻעוֹת may be either the plural construct of שְׁבוּעַ, the seventh, the heptad, or the plural of שְׁבוּעָה, an oath, or the passive participle of שָׁבַע, to be sworn, like שִׁבְעֵי שְׁבֻעוֹת in Ezek. xxi. 28. There is no material difference in the meaning obtained from the last two; and the view we take of the word אֹמֶר must decide between them and the first explanation. This word, which is peculiar to poetry, denotes a discourse or a word, and

in Job xxii. 28 the affair, or the occasion, like דָּבָר. Here, at any rate, it signifies the address or word of God, as in Ps. lxviii. 12, lxxvii. 9, and is either a genitive dependent upon *mattōth* or an adverbial accusative. The Masoretic pointing, according to which *mattōth* is separated from *'ōmer* by *tiphchah*, and the latter joined to *selâh* by *munach*, is connected with the evidently false rabbinical rendering of *selah* as eternity (*in sempiternum*), and being decidedly erroneous, cannot be taken into consideration at all. But the interpretation of שְׁבָעוֹת as the seventh, does not suit either of these two possible views of *'ōmer*. We therefore prefer the second meaning, chastising rods or chastisements. אֹמֶר, however, cannot be a genitive dependent upon *mattōth;* since chastisements of speech would hardly stand for chastisements which God had spoken, but, according to the analogy of שֵׁבֶט פִּיו in Isa. xi. 4, would point to chastisements consisting in words, and this does not agree with the present train of thought. *'Omer* is rather an adverbial accusative, and belongs to שְׁבָעוֹת, indicating the instrument or media employed in the swearing: sworn with the word or through the word, like חַרְבְּךָ in Ps. xvii. 13 (for the use of the accusative to describe the substance or the instrumental medium of an action, see Ewald, § 282, *c*). Hence שְׁבָעוֹת cannot be a noun, but must be a passive participle, sworn. The expression, "chastising rods (chastisements) are sworn through the word," points to the solemn oath with which God promised in Deut. xxxii. 40–42 to take vengeance upon His enemies, and avenge the blood of His servants: "For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, As I live for ever, when I have sharpened my glittering sword, and my hand grasps for judgment, I will render vengeance to mine adversaries, and repay them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword will eat flesh; from the blood of the slain and the captives, from the hairy head of the enemy." That Habakkuk had in his mind this promise of the vengeance of God upon His enemies, which is strengthened by a solemn oath, is unmistakeably evident, if we compare בָּרַק חָנִיתֶךָ in ver. 11 with בָּרַק חַרְבִּי in Deut. xxxii. 41, and observe the allusion in רֹאשׁ מִבִּית רָשָׁע and רֹאשׁ פָּרְזוֹ in vers. 13 and 14 to רֹאשׁ פַּרְעוֹת אוֹיֵב in Deut. xxxii. 42. From this promise the words of the prophet, which are so enigmatical in themselves, obtain the requisite light to

render them intelligible. Gesenius (*Thes.* p. 877) has explained the prophet's words in a similar manner, *jurejurando firmatæ sunt castigationes promissæ* (the threatened rods, *i.e.* chastisements, are sworn), even without noticing the allusion to Deut. xxxii. 40 sqq. upon which these words are founded. Delitzsch was the first to call attention to the allusion to Deut. xxxii. 40 sqq.; but in his explanation, "the darts are sworn through his word of power (*jurejurando adstricta sunt tela verbo tuo*)," the swearing is taken in a sense which is foreign to Deuteronomy, and therefore conceals the connection with the original passage. Of the other explanations not one can be vindicated. The rabbinical view which we find in the Vulgate, *juramenta tribubus quæ locutus es*, is overthrown by the fact that שְׁבָעוֹת without a preposition cannot mean *per*, or *ob*, or *juxta juramenta*, as we should have to render it, and as Luther actually has rendered it in his version ("as Thou hadst sworn to the tribes"). Ewald's rendering, "sevenfold darts of the word," is precluded by the combination of ideas, "darts of the word," which is quite foreign to the context. According to our explanation, the passage does indeed form simply a parenthesis in the description of the judicial interposition of God, but it contains a very fitting thought, through which the description gains in emphasis. In the last clause of the verse the description is continued in the manner already begun, and the effect indicated, which is produced upon the world of nature by the judicial interposition of God: "Thou splittest the earth into rivers." בָּקַע is construed with a double accusative, as in Zech. xiv. 4. This may be understood either as signifying that the earth trembles at the wrath of the Judge, and rents arise in consequence, through which rivers of water burst forth from the deep, or so that at the quaking of the earth the sea pours its waves over the land and splits it into rivers. The following verses point to an earthquake through which the form of the earth's surface is changed.

Ver. 10. "*The mountains see Thee, they writhe: a shower of waters passes along: the abyss lifts up its voice, it lifts up its hands on high.* Ver. 11. *Sun, moon, enter into their habitation at the light of Thine arrows which shoot by, at the shining of the lightning of Thy spear.*" The effect of the coming of God upon the mountains was already referred to in ver. 6. There

they crumbled into ruins, here they writhe with terror. This difference is to be explained from the fact that there (ver. 6) the general effect of the omnipotence of God upon nature was intended, whereas here (vers. 10, 11) the special effect is described, which is produced upon nature by the judgment about to be executed by God upon the nations. The perfects in the description represent this effect as following immediately upon the coming of God. But in the first clause of ver. 10 the perfect רָאוּךָ is followed by the imperfect יָחִילוּ, because the writhing is a lasting condition. The force of the description is heightened by the omission of the copula before the clauses and the particular objects. The two verbs of the first clause stand in the relation of cause and effect to one another: when the mountains have seen Thee, they writhe with terror. The further description is not founded upon the idea of a terrible storm; for there is no reference to thunder, nor even to lightnings, but only to the arrows (ver. 11), which may be explained from the idea of God, as a warlike hero, making bare His bow. The colours and different features of the description are borrowed from the judgment of the flood. Ver. 10 (*a* and *b*) points to this divine judgment of the olden time, both the coming of the showers of water (*geshem* as in Gen. vii. 12 and viii. 2, and strengthened by *mayim*, analogous to *hammabbûl hâyâh mayim* in Gen. vii. 6; *'âbhar* as in Nah. iii. 19, Ps. xlviii. 5), and also the *nâthan t'hōm qōlō*, the raging outburst of the abyss. *T'hōm* is the mass of water in the abyss, not merely that of the ocean, but that of the subterranean waters also (Gen. xlix. 25; Deut. xxxiii. 13), the "great deep" (*t'hōm rabbâh*), whose fountains were broken up at the flood (Gen. vii. 11); and not the ocean of heaven, as Hitzig erroneously infers from Gen. vii. 11, viii. 2, and Prov. viii. 27. To this mass of water, which is called *t'hōm* from its roaring depth, the prophet attributes a voice, which it utters, to express the loud, mighty roaring of the waters as they rush forth from the bursting earth. As at the time of the flood, which was a type of the last judgment (Isa. xxiv. 18), the windows of heaven and the fountains of the deep were opened, so that the upper and lower waters, which are divided by the firmament, rushed together again, and the earth returned, as it were, to its condition before the second day of creation; so

here also the rivers of earth and rain-showers of heaven come together, so that the abyss roars up with a loud noise (Delitzsch). This roaring outburst of the mass of waters from the heart of the earth is then represented as a lifting up of the hands to heaven, with reference to the fact that the waves are thrown up. *Rōm* = *rūm* (Prov. xxv. 3, xxi. 4) is an accusative of direction, like *mârōm* in 2 Kings xix. 22. יָדֵיהוּ, for יָדָיו, a full-sounding and more extended form, possibly to express by the rhythm the greatness of the prodigy, how *magna vi brachii tollunt* (Delitzsch). The lifting up of the hands is not a gesture denoting either an oath or rebellion; but it is an involuntary utterance of terror, of restlessness, of anguish, as it were, with a prayer for help (Delitzsch).—Ver. 11. The chaotic condition into which the earth has been brought is heightened by the darkness in which the heaven clothes itself. Sun and moon, which give light to day and night, have put themselves, or entered, into their habitation. זְבוּל with ה local, a dwelling-place, is, according to oriental view, the place from which the stars come out when they rise, and to which they return when they set. Nevertheless it is not actual setting that is spoken of here, but simply their obscuration, which is not the effect of heavy clouds that pour out their water in showers of rain, but is caused by the shining of the arrows of God (לְ in לְאוֹר and לְנֹגַהּ denoting the outward cause or occasion). It is not, however, that they "turn pale in consequence of the surpassing brilliancy of the lightnings" (Ewald), but that they "withdraw altogether, from the fear and horror which pervade all nature, and which are expressed in the mountains by trembling, in the waters by roaring, and in the sun and moon by obscuration" (Delitzsch). The idea that this verse refers to the standing still of the sun and moon at the believing word of Joshua (Josh. x. 12 sqq.), in which nearly all the earlier commentators agreed, is quite untenable, inasmuch as עָמַד זְבוּלָה cannot mean to stand still in the sky. The arrows and spear (*chănīth*) of God are not lightnings, as in Ps. lxxvii. 18, 19, xviii. 15, etc., because this theophany is not founded upon the idea of a storm, but the darts with which God as a warrior smites down His foes, as the instruments and effects of the wrath of God. A brilliant splendour is attributed to them, because they emanate from Him whose coming, like the sunlight, pours out its rays

on both sides (ver. 4). בָּרָק חֲנִית has the same meaning here as in Nah. iii. 3: the flashing, because naked and sharpened, spear. And just as we cannot understand the "bright sword" of Nah. iii. 3 as signifying flashes of lightning, so here we cannot take the arrows as lightnings. יְהַלֵּכוּ is to be taken relatively, "which pass along, or shoot by."

In ver. 12 there follows a description of the judgment upon the nations for the rescue of the people of God. Ver. 12. "*In fury Thou walkest through the earth, in wrath Thou stampest down nations.* Ver. 13. *Thou goest out to the rescue of Thy people, to the rescue of Thine anointed one; Thou dashest in pieces the head from the house of the wicked one, laying bare the foundation even to the neck. Selah.* Ver. 14. *Thou piercest with his spears the head of his hordes, which storm hither to beat me to powder, whose rejoicing is, as it were, to swallow the poor in secret.* Ver. 15. *Thou treadest upon the sea: Thy horses, upon the heap of great waters.*" The Lord, at whose coming in the terrible glory of the majesty of the Judge of the world all nature trembles and appears to fall into its primary chaotic state, marches over the earth, and stamps or tramples down the nations with His feet (compare the kindred figure of the treader of the winepress in Isa. lxiii. 1–6). Not all nations, however, but only those that are hostile to Him; for He has come forth to save His people and His anointed one. The perfects in vers. 13–15 are prophetic, describing the future in spirit as having already occurred. יָצָא, referring to the going out of God to fight for His people, as in Judg. v. 4, 2 Sam. v. 24, Isa. xlii. 13, etc. יְשַׁע, rescue, salvation, is construed the second time with an accusative like an inf. constr. (see Ewald, § 239, *a*). The anointed of God is not the chosen, consecrated nation (Schnur., Ros., Hitzig, Ewald, etc.); for the nation of Israel is never called the anointed one (*hammâshīăch*) by virtue of its calling to be "a kingdom of priests" (*mamlekheth kohănīm*, Ex. xix. 6), neither in Ps. xxviii. 8 nor in Ps. lxxxiv. 10, lxxxix. 39. Even in Ps. cv. 15 it is not the Israelites who are called by God "my anointed" (*meshīchai*), but the patriarchs, as princes consecrated by God (Gen. xxiii. 6). And so here also מְשִׁיחֶךָ is the divinely-anointed king of Israel; not, however, this or that historical king—say Josiah, Jehoiakim, or even Jehoiachin—but the Davidic king absolutely, including

the Messiah, in whom the sovereignty of David is raised to an eternal duration, "just as by the Chaldæan king here and in ch. ii. we must understand the Chaldæan kings generally" (Delitzsch), since the prophecy spreads from the judgment upon the Chaldæans to the universal judgment upon the nations, and the Chaldæan is merely introduced as the possessor of the imperial power. The Messiah as the Son of David is distinguished from Jehovah, and as such is the object of divine help, just as in Zech. ix. 9, where He is called נוֹשָׁע in this respect, and in the royal Messianic psalms. This help God bestows upon His people and His anointed, by dashing in pieces the head from the house of the wicked one. The *râshâʿ* (wicked one) is the Chaldæan, not the nation, however, which is spoken of for the first time in ver. 14, but the Chaldæan king, as chief of the imperial power which is hostile to the kingdom of God. But, as the following clause clearly shows, the house is the house in the literal sense, so that the "head," as part of the house, is the gable. A distinction is drawn between this and *yʿsōd*, the foundation, and צַוָּאר, the neck, *i.e.* the central part looking from the gable downwards. The destruction takes place both from above and below at once, so that the gable and the foundation are dashed in pieces with one blow, and that even to the neck, *i.e.* up to the point at which the roof or gable rests upon the walls. עַד, inclusive, embracing the part mentioned as the boundary; not exclusive, so as to leave the walls still rising up as ruins. The description is allegorical, the house representing the Chaldæan dynasty, the royal family including the king, but not "including the exalted Chaldæan kingdom in all its prosperity" (Hitzig). עֲרוֹת, a rare form of the inf. abs., like שְׁחוֹת in Isa. xxii. 13 (cf. Ewald, § 240, *b*), from עָרָה, to make bare, to destroy from the very foundation, the infinitive in the sense of the gerund describing the mode of the action. The warlike nation meets with the same fate as the royal house (ver. 14). The meaning of the first clause of the verse depends upon the explanation to be given to the word *pʿrâzâv*. There is no foundation for the meaning leaders or judges, which has been claimed for the word *pʿrâzīm* ever since the time of Schrœder and Schnur. In Hebrew usage *pʿrâzī* signifies the inhabitant of the plain (Deut. iii. 5; 1 Sam. vi. 18), and *pʿrâzōth* the plains, the open flat land, as distin-

guished from walled cities (Ezek. xxxviii. 11). *P'râzōn* has the same meaning in Judg. v. 7 and 11. Consequently Delitzsch derives *p'râzâv* from a segholate noun *perez* or *pērez*, in the sense of the population settled upon the open country, the villagers and peasantry, whence the more general signification of a crowd or multitude of people, and here, since the context points to warriors, the meaning hordes, or hostile companies, which agrees with the Targum, Rashi, and Kimchi, who explain the word as signifying warriors or warlike troops. רֹאשׁ, the head of his hordes, cannot be the leader, partly because of what follows, "who come storming on," which presupposes that not the leader only, but the hordes or warriors, will be destroyed, and partly also because of the preceding verse, in which the destruction of the king is pronounced, and also because the distinction between the king and the leader of the army is at variance with the complex character of the prophetic description. We must take רֹאשׁ in the literal sense, but collectively, "heads." The prophet was led to the unusual figure of the piercing of the head by the reminiscence of the piercing of Sisera's head by Jael (Judg. v. 26). The suffixes in בְּמַטָּיו and פִּרְזוֹ refer back to רֹאשׁ. מַטָּיו, sticks, for lances or spears, after 2 Sam. xviii. 14. The meaning of the words is this: with the spear of the king God pierces the heads of his warlike troops; and the thought expressed is, that the hostile troops will slay one another in consequence of the confusion, as was the case in the wars described in 1 Sam. xiv. 20 and 2 Chron. xx. 23, 24, and as, according to prophecy, the last hostile power of the world is to meet with its ruin when it shall attack the kingdom of God (Ezek. xxxviii. 21; Zech. xiv. 13). יִסְעֲרוּ לְהָפִיצֵנִי is to be taken relatively: "which storm hither (*sâ'ar*, approach with the swiftness and violence of a storm) to destroy me." The prophet includes himself along with the nation, and uses *hēphīts* with reference to the figure of the dispersion or powdering of the chaff by a stormy wind (Isa. xli. 16; Jer. xiii. 24, xviii. 17). עֲלִיצָתָם forms a substantive clause by itself: "their rejoicing is," for they who rejoice, as if to swallow, *i.e.* whose rejoicing is directed to this, to swallow the poor in secret. The enemies are compared to highway murderers, who lurk in dark corners for the defenceless traveller, and look forward with rejoicing for the moment when they may be able to murder him.

עָנִי forms the antithesis to רָשָׁע. Inasmuch as "the wicked" denotes the Chaldæan; "the poor" is the nation of Israel, *i.e.* the congregation of the righteous, who are really the people of God. To devour the poor, *i.e.* to take violent possession of his life and all that he has (cf. Prov. xxx. 14, and for the fact itself, Ps. x. 8-10), is, when applied to a nation, to destroy it (*vid.* Deut. vii. 16 and Jer. x. 25).

In order that these enemies may be utterly destroyed, God passes through the sea. This thought in ver. 15 connects the conclusion of the description of the judicial coming of God with what precedes. The drapery of the thought rests upon the fact of the destruction of Pharaoh and his horsemen in the Red Sea (Ex. xiv.). The sea, the heap of many waters, is not a figurative expression for the army of the enemy, but is to be taken literally. This is required by דָּרַכְתָּ בַיָּם, since דָּרַךְ with ב, to tread upon a place, or enter into it (cf. Mic. v. 4, Isa. lix. 8, Deut. xi. 24, 25), does not suit the figurative interpretation; and it is required still more by the parallel passages, viz. Ps. lxxvii. 20 (בַּיָּם דַּרְכֶּךָ), which floated before the prophet's mind, and Zech. x. 11. Just as God went through the Red Sea in the olden time to lead Israel through, and to destroy the Egyptian army, so will He in the future go through the sea and do the same, when He goes forth to rescue His people out of the power of the Chaldæan. The prophet does not express the latter indeed, but it is implied in what he says. סוּסֶיךָ is an accusative, not *instrumenti*, however, but of more precise definition: thou, namely, according to thy horses; for "with thy horses," as in Ps. lxxxiii. 19, xliv. 3 (אַתָּה יָדֶךָ); cf. Ewald, § 281, *c*, and 293, *c*. The horses are to be taken, as in ver. 8, as harnessed to the chariots; and they are mentioned here with reference to the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, which were destroyed by Jehovah in the sea. *Chōmer*, in the sense of heap, as in Ex. viii. 10, is not an accusative, but is still dependent upon the ב of the parallel clause. The expression "heap of many waters" serves simply to fill up the picture, as in Ps. lxxvii. 20.

Vers. 16-19 form the second part of the psalm, in which the prophet describes the feelings that are produced within himself by the coming of the Lord to judge the nations, and to rescue His own people; viz. first of all, fear and trembling

at the tribulation (vers. 16, 17); then exulting joy, in his confident trust in the God of salvation (vers. 18, 19). Ver. 16. "*I heard it, then my belly trembled, at the sound my lips yelled; rottenness forces itself into my bones, and I tremble under myself, that I am to wait quietly for the day of tribulation, when he that attacketh it approacheth the nation.* Ver. 17. *For the fig-tree will not blossom, and there is no yield on the vines; the produce of the olive-tree disappoints, and the corn-fields bear no food; the flock is away from the fold, and no ox in the stalls.*" שָׁמַעְתִּי is not connected with the theophany depicted in vers. 3–15, since this was not an audible phenomenon, but was an object of inward vision, "a spectacle which presented itself to the eye." "I heard" corresponds to "I have heard" in ver. 2, and, like the latter, refers to the report heard from God of the approaching judgment. This address goes back to its starting-point, to explain the impression which it made upon the prophet, and to develop still how he "was afraid." The alarm pervades his whole body, belly, and bones, *i.e.* the softer and firmer component parts of the body; lips and feet, *i.e.* the upper and lower organs of the body. The lips cried *l'qōl*, at the voice, the sound of God, which the prophet heard. *Tsâlal* is used elsewhere only of the ringing of the ears (1 Sam. iii. 11; 2 Kings xxi. 12; Jer. xix. 3); but here it is applied to the chattering sound produced by the lips, when they smite one another before crying out, not to the chattering of the teeth. Into the bones there penetrates *râqâbh*, rottenness, inward consumption of the bones, as an effect of alarm or pain, which paralyzes all the powers, and takes away all firmness from the body. (cf. Prov. xii. 4, xiv. 30). *Tachtai*, under me, *i.e.* in my lower members, knees, feet: not as in Ex. xvi. 29, 2 Sam. ii. 23, on the spot where I stand (cf. Ewald, § 217, *k*). אֲשֶׁר אָנוּחַ might mean, "I who was to rest;" but it is more appropriate to take *'ăsher* as a relative conjunction, "that I," since the clause explains the great fear that had fallen upon him. אֲשֶׁר is used in a similar way, viz. as a conjunction with the verb in the first person, in Ezek. xxix. 29. *Nūăch*, to rest, not to rest in the grave (Luther and others), nor to bear quietly or endure (Ges., Maurer), but to wait quietly or silently. For it could hardly occasion such consuming pain to a God-fearing man as that which the prophet experienced, to bear misfortune quietly,

when it has already come, and cannot be averted; but it might be to wait quietly and silently, in constant anticipation. *Tsârâh*, the trouble which the Chaldæans bring upon Judah. לַעֲלוֹת is not subordinate to לְיוֹם צָרָה, but co-ordinate with it, and is still dependent upon אָנוּחַ; and יְגוּדֵנוּ, as a relative clause (who oppresses it), is the subject to לַעֲלוֹת: "that I am to wait quietly for him that attacketh to approach my nation." For if לַעֲלוֹת were dependent upon לְיוֹם, it would be necessary to supply יוֹם as the subject: "when it (the day) comes." But this is precluded by the fact that עָלָה is not used for the approach or breaking of day. לְעַם, to the people, *dativ. incomm.*, is practically equivalent to עַל עַם, against the people. עַם, used absolutely, as in Isa. xxvi. 11, xlii. 6, is the nation of Israel. *Gûd*, as in Gen. xlix. 19, 20, *i.e. gâdad*, to press upon a person, to attack him, or crowd together against him (cf. Ps. xciv. 21). In ver. 17 the trouble of this day is described; and the sensation of pain, in the anticipation of the period of calamity, is thereby still further accounted for. The plantations and fields yield no produce. Folds and stalls are empty in consequence of the devastation of the land by the hostile troops and their depredations: "a prophetic picture of the devastation of the holy land by the Chaldæan war" (Delitzsch). Fig-tree and vine are mentioned as the noblest fruit-trees of the land, as is frequently the case (see Joel i. 7; Hos. ii. 14; Mic. iv. 4). To this there is added the olive-tree, as in Mic. vi. 15, Deut. vi. 11, viii. 8, etc. *Ma'asēh zayith* is not the shoot, but the produce or fruit of the olive-tree, after the phrase עָשָׂה פְּרִי, to bear fruit. *Kichēsh*, to disappoint, namely the expectation of produce, as in Hos. ix. 2. *Sh'dēmōth*, which only occurs in the plural, corn-fields, is construed here as in Isa. xvi. 8, with the verb in the singular, because, so far as the sense was concerned, it had become almost equivalent to *sâdeh*, the field (see Ewald, § 318, *a*). *Gâzar*, to cut off, used here in a neuter sense: to be cut off or absent. מִכְלָה, contracted from מִכְלָאָה: fold, pen, an enclosed place for sheep. *Repheth*, *ἅπ. λεγ.*, the rack, then the stable or stall.

Although trembling on account of the approaching trouble, the prophet will nevertheless exult in the prospect of the salvation that he foresees. Ver. 18. "*But I, in Jehovah will I rejoice, will shout in the God of my salvation.* Ver. 19. *Jehovah the*

Lord is my strength, and makes my feet like the hinds, and causes me to walk along upon my high places." The turning-point is introduced with וַאֲנִי, as is frequently the case in the Psalms. For this exaltation out of the sufferings of this life to believing joy in God, compare Ps. v. 8, xiii. 6, xxxi. 15, etc. אָלַז, a softened form of עָלַץ, to rejoice in God (cf. Ps. v. 12), *i.e.* so that God is the inexhaustible source and infinite sphere of the joy, because He is the God of salvation, and rises up to judgment upon the nations, to procure the salvation of His people (ver. 13). *Elōhē yish'ī* (the God of my salvation), as in Ps. xviii. 47, xxv. 5 (see at Mic. vii. 7). The thoughts of the 19th verse are also formed from reminiscences of Ps. xviii.: the first clause, "the Lord is my strength," from ver. 33. "God, who girdeth me with strength," *i.e.* the Lord gives me strength to overcome all tribulation (cf. Ps. xxvii. 1 and 2 Cor. xii. 9). The next two clauses are from Ps. xviii. 34, "He maketh my feet like hinds'," according to the contracted simile common in Hebrew for "hinds' feet;" and the reference is to the swiftness of foot, which was one of the qualifications of a thorough man of war (2 Sam. i. 23; 1 Chron. xii. 8), so as to enable him to make a sudden attack upon the enemy, and pursue him vigorously. Here it is a figurative expression for the fresh and joyous strength acquired in God, which Isaiah calls rising up with eagles' wings (Isa. xl. 29–31). Causing to walk upon the high places of the land, was originally a figure denoting the victorious possession and government of a land. It is so in Deut. xxxii. 13 and xxxiii. 29, from which David has taken the figure in Ps. xviii., though he has altered the high places of the earth into "my high places" (*bâmōthai*). They were the high places upon which the Lord had placed him, by giving him the victory over his enemies. And Habakkuk uses the figurative expression in the same sense, with the simple change of יַעֲמִידֵנִי into יַדְרִכֵנִי after Deut. xxxiii. 29, to substitute for the bestowment of victory the maintenance of victory corresponding to the blessing of Moses. We have therefore to understand *bâmōthai* neither as signifying the high places of the enemy, nor the high places at home, nor high places generally. The figure must be taken as a whole; and according to this, it simply denotes the ultimate triumph of the people of God over all oppression on the part of the power of the world, altogether apart from the

local standing which the kingdom of God will have upon the earth, either by the side of or in antagonism to the kingdom of the world. The prophet prays and speaks throughout the entire ode in the name of the believing congregation. His pain is their pain; his joy their joy. Accordingly he closes his ode by appropriating to himself and all believers the promise which the Lord has given to His people and to David His anointed servant, to express the confident assurance that the God of salvation will keep it, and fulfil it in the approaching attack on the part of the power of the world upon the nation which has been refined by the judgment.

The last words, לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינֹתַי, do not form part of the contents of the supplicatory ode, but are a subscription answering to the heading in ver. 1, and refer to the use of the ode in the worship of God, and simply differ from the headings לַמְנַצֵּחַ בִּנְגִינוֹת in Ps. iv., vi., liv., lv., lxvii., and lxxvi., through the use of the suffix in בִּנְגִינֹתַי. Through the words, "*to the president* (of the temple-music, or the conductor) *in accompaniment of my stringed playing*," the prophet appoints his psalm for use in the public worship of God accompanied by his stringed playing. Hitzig's rendering is grammatically false, "to the conductor of my pieces of music;" for בְּ cannot be used as a periphrasis for the genitive, but when connected with a musical expression, only means *with* or *in the accompaniment of* (ב *instrumenti* or *concomitantiæ*). Moreover, נְגִינוֹת does not mean pieces of music, but simply a song, and the playing upon stringed instruments, or the stringed instrument itself (see at Ps. iv.). The first of these renderings gives no suitable sense here, so that there only remains the second, viz. "playing upon stringed instruments." But if the prophet, by using this formula, stipulates that the ode is to be used in the temple, accompanied by stringed instruments, the expression *bingīnōthai*, with *my* stringed playing, affirms that he himself will accompany it with his own playing, from which it has been justly inferred that he was qualified, according to the arrangements of the Israelitish worship, to take part in the public performance of such pieces of music as were suited for public worship, and therefore belonged to the Levites who were entrusted with the conduct of the musical performance of the temple.

ZEPHANIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

1. PERSON OF THE PROPHET.—*Zephaniah's* family is traced back in the heading to his book through four members, namely, to his great-great-grandfather *Hezekiah;* from which it has been justly inferred, that inasmuch as the father only is mentioned as a general rule, Hezekiah must have been a celebrated man, and that in all probability the king of that name is intended. For the only other person of such a name mentioned in the earlier history is an Ephraimite called *Y'hizkiyâh* in 2 Chron. xxviii. 12, and he can hardly be the person intended. The circumstance that Hezekiah is not described as the king of that name by the predicate *hammelekh* or *melekh Y'hūdâh,* furnishes no decided argument against this assumption, but may probably be explained on the ground that the predicate "king of Judah" follows immediately afterwards in connection with Josiah's name. There is still less force in the objection, that in the genealogy of the kings only two generations occur between Hezekiah and Josiah, inasmuch as Manasseh reigned for fifty-five years, that is to say, for nearly two generations. The name Zephaniah (*Ts'phanyâh*), *i.e.* he whom Jehovah hides or shelters, not "*speculator et arcanorum Dei cognitor,*" as Jerome explains it according to an erroneous derivation from *tsâphâh* instead of *tsâphan,* occurs again as the name of a priest (Jer. xxi. 1, xxix. 25, etc.), as well as of other persons (cf. Zech. vi. 10, 14, 1 Chron. vi. 21). The LXX. write it Σοφονίας, *Sophonias,* according to their usual custom of expressing ע by σ, and the Sheva by a short vowel which is regulated by the full vowel that follows; they have also changed the *a* into *o,* as in the case of Γοδολίου for *G'dalyâh* in ch. i. 1. Nothing further is known concerning the prophet's life. The state-

ment in Ps. Doroth. and Ps. Epiph., that he sprang "from the tribe of Simeon, from the mountain of Sarabathá" (*al.* Baratha or Sabartharam), is quite worthless. The date at which he lived is determined by the statement in the heading to his book, to the effect that he prophesied under king Josiah the son of Amos, who reigned from 641 to 610 B.C. This agrees both with the place assigned to his book in the series of the minor prophets, namely, between Habakkuk and Haggai, and also by the contents of his prophecies. According to ch. ii. 13 sqq., where he predicts the destruction of the kingdom of Asshur and the city of Nineveh, the Assyrian empire was still in existence in his time, and Nineveh was not yet conquered, which took place, according to our discussions on Nahum (p. 44 sqq.), at the earliest, in the closing years of Josiah's reign, and possibly not till after his death. Moreover, his description of the moral depravity which prevailed in Jerusalem coincided in many respects with that of Jeremiah, whose labours as a prophet commenced in the thirteenth year of Josiah. Along with the worship of Jehovah (ch. i. 5; cf. Jer. vi. 20), he speaks of idolatry (ch. i. 4, 5; cf. Jer. vii. 17, 18), of false swearing by Jehovah, and swearing by the idols (ch. i. 5*b*; Jer. v. 2, vii. 9, and v. 7, xii. 16), of the wicked treatment of the *thorâh* (ch. iii. 4; Jer. viii. 8, 9), of the fruitlessness of all the admonitions that have hitherto been addressed to Judah (ch. iii. 2; Jer. ii. 30, vii. 28), and of the deep moral corruption that has pervaded all ranks—the royal family, the princes, the prophets, and the priests (ch. i. 4, 8, 9, iii. 3, 4; cf. Jer. ii. 8, 26). He describes the nation as a shameless one (ch. ii. 1, iii. 5; cf. Jer. iii. 3, vi. 15, viii. 12), and Jerusalem as a rebellious city (מֹרְאָה, ch. iii. 1; cf. Jer. iv. 17, v. 23), as stained with blood and the abominations of idolatry (ch. iii. 1; cf. Jer. ii. 22, 23, 34), and as oppressive towards widows and orphans, and with its houses full of unrighteous possessions (ch. iii. 1 and i. 9; cf. Jer. v. 27, 28, vi. 6).

The only point open to dispute is whether Zephaniah's prophecy belonged to the first or the second half of the thirty-first year of Josiah's reign. Whilst Ewald supposes that Zephaniah wrote at a time when "not even any preparation had yet been made in Jerusalem for that important and thorough reformation of religion which king Josiah attempted with such

energetic decision and such good results in the second half of his reign" (2 Kings xxii. xxiii.), most of the other commentators infer from ch. i. 4, where the extermination of the remnant of Baal is predicted, and with greater propriety, that Josiah's reformation of religion had already commenced, and that the outward predominance of idolatry was already broken down when Zephaniah uttered his prophecies. For the prophet could not well speak of a remnant of Baal before the abolition of the idolatry introduced into the kingdom by Manasseh and Amon had really commenced. But Ewald and Hävernick reply to this, that the prophet announces that even the remnant and the name of idolatry are to disappear, so that nothing at all will remain, and that this presupposes that in the time of the prophet not only the remnant of the worship of Baal was in existence, but the Baal-worship itself. But however correct the former remark may be, there is no ground for the conclusion drawn from it. The destruction of Baal, even to the very remnant and name, does not warrant the assumption that the worship of Baal still existed in undiminished power and extent at the time when the threat was uttered, but could be fully explained if there were only remnants of it left to which the expression "remnant of Baal" primarily refers. If nothing had been hitherto done for the abolition of idolatry, Zephaniah would certainly have spoken differently and more strongly than he does in ch. i. 4, 5, concerning the abomination of it. If, for example, according to ch. i. 5, sacrifices were still offered upon the roofs to the army of heaven, the existence of the Jehovah-worship is also presupposed in the reproof in ch. iii. iv., "the priests pollute the sanctuary;" and in the words "them that swear by Jehovah, and swear by their king" (ch. i. 5), Jehovah-worship and idolatry are mentioned as existing side by side. We cannot therefore regard the opinion, that "throughout the whole of the prophecy there is no trace of any allusion to Josiah's reformation," as a well-founded one. According to the more precise account given in the Chronicles, Josiah commenced the reformation of worship in the twelfth year of his reign (2 Chron. xxxiv. 3–7), and in the eighteenth year he had the temple repaired. It was then that the book of the law was discovered, the reading of which affected the king so much, that he not only appointed a solemn passover, but after the

feast was over had all the remaining traces of idolatry in Jerusalem and Judah completely obliterated (2 Kings xxiii. 24). Now, as Zephaniah's prophecy presupposes the maintenance of the temple-worship, it can only have been uttered after the purification of the temple from the abominations of idolatry that were practised in its courts, and in all probability was not uttered till after the completion of the repairs of the temple, and the celebration of the solemn passover in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign. The time cannot be determined more exactly. The threat in ch. i. 8, that the judgment shall fall upon the princes, and even upon the king's sons, does not warrant us in concluding that the sons of Josiah had reached a sufficient age to have occasioned the announcement of punishment, by sinful acts for which they themselves were accountable, which would not apply to the twelfth year of the king's reign, when Jehoiakim was six years old, Jehoahaz four years, and when Zedekiah was not yet born, but only to the eighteenth year, when Jehoiakim had reached his twelfth year and Jehoahaz his tenth. For "the king's sons" are not necessarily the sons of the reigning sovereign only, but may also include the sons of the deceased kings, Manasseh and Amon; and this general threat of judgment announced against all ranks may be understood without hesitation as relating to all princes or persons of royal blood. The character of the prophecy as a whole also furnishes no decisive points bearing upon the question, whether it was uttered or composed before or after the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign. For the tendency to promote the work of religious reformation which had already commenced, by means of strong prophetic encouragements, in order that it might lead to a division, and therefore to decision for the Lord (ch. ii. 1–3), which Hävernick and several other commentators claim for our prophecy, can no more be proved to exist in the writing before us, than the conjecture expressed by Delitzsch in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*, that the prophet did not come forward with his threat till the efforts of the pious king to exterminate utterly the worship of Baal had reached their highest point, without securing their end; inasmuch as it is in accordance with the position of things and the character of prophecy, that when human efforts have done their utmost without securing the desired result, Jehovah interposes and

threatens what still remains of Baal with His outstretched arm of punishment. For, however correct the remark (of Delitzsch) may be, that in the form in which the prophecy lies before us it contains no trace of any intention to promote the work taken in hand by the king, and that the state of the nation as reflected therein is not a progressive one in process of reformation, but appears rather to be a finished one and ripe for judgment; the latter only applies to the mass of the nation, who were incorrigible, and therefore ripe for judgment, and does not preclude the existence of a better kernel, to which the prophet could still preach repentance, and cry, "Seek ye the Lord, seek humility; perhaps ye may be hidden in the day of Jehovah" (ch. ii. 3). But the nation was in this state not only after the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, but also before it; and the efforts of the pious king to exterminate idolatry, and to raise and revive the worship of Jehovah, could effect no further alteration in this, than that individuals out of the corrupt mass were converted, and were saved from destruction. The measure of the sin, which was inevitably followed by the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, had been already filled by Manasseh, and Josiah's reformation could only effect a postponement, and not avert the threatened judgment (compare 2 Kings xxi. 10–16 with xxiii. 26, 27).

2. THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH does not contain two or three prophetic addresses, but the quintessence of the oral proclamations of the prophet condensed into one lengthened prophecy, commencing with the threat of judgment (ch. i.), proceeding to an exhortation to repentance (ch. ii.–iii. 8), and concluding with a promise of the salvation which would flourish for the remnant of Israel after the termination of the judgment (ch. iii. 9–20). This is arranged in three sections. The first section consists of the first chapter; the second reaches from ch. ii. 1 to ch. iii. 8; and the third comprises ch. iii. 9–20. This division is indicated by both the contents and the form of the announcement: by the contents, since the first two parts threaten the judgment and assign the reason, whilst the third follows with the promise; by the form, inasmuch as the thought in ch. i. 18, "All the earth shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy," is repeated as a *refrain* in ch. iii. 8, and the *hōi* in

ch. ii. 5 answers to the *hōi* in ch. iii. 1; the former announcing the judgment upon the nations, the latter the judgment upon Jerusalem, which assigns the motive for the summons to repentance in ch. ii. 1–4. Zephaniah proclaims the judgment upon the whole earth, upon all the heathen nations, and upon Judah and Jerusalem, in the following order: In the first part of his prophecy he threatens the near approach of the judgment upon the whole earth (ch. i. 2–7) and upon Judah (ch. i. 8–13), and depicts its terrible character (ch. i. 14–18); and in the second part (ch. ii.–iii. 8) he exhorts the people to repent, and the righteous to persevere (ch. ii. 1–3), and assigns a reason for this exhortation, by announcing that the Lord will judge the heathen nations both near at hand and far off for the reproach which they have cast upon His people, and by destroying their power lead them to reverence His name (ch. ii. 4–15), and will also bring His righteousness to light in Jerusalem and Judah by the destruction of the ungodly (ch. iii. 1–8). Then (the announcement of salvation commences thus in ch. iii. 9, 10) will the nations serve Jehovah with one accord, and lead His scattered people to Him. The remnant of Israel will be made into a humble nation of God by the destruction of the wicked one out of the midst of it; and being sheltered by its God, it will rejoice in undisturbed happiness, and be exalted to "a name and praise" among all the nations of the earth (ch. iii. 11–20).

Zephaniah's prophecy has a more general character, embracing both judgment and salvation in their totality, so as to form one complete picture. It not only commences with the announcement of a universal judgment upon the whole world, out of which the judgment rises that will fall upon Judah on account of its sins, and upon the world of nations on account of its hostility to the people of Jehovah; but it treats throughout of the great and terrible day of Jehovah, on which the fire of the wrath of God consumes the whole earth (ch. i. 14–18, ii. 2, iii. 8). But the judgment, as a revelation of the wrath of God on account of the general corruption of the world, does not form the centre of gravity or the sole object of the whole of the predictions of our prophet. The end and goal at which they aim are rather the establishment of divine righteousness in the earth, and the judgment is simply the means and the

way by which this the aim of all the development of the world's history is to be realized. This comes clearly out in the second and third sections. Jehovah will manifest Himself terribly to the nations, to destroy all the gods of the earth, that all the islands of the nations may worship Him (ch. ii. 11). By pouring out His wrath upon nations and kingdoms, He will turn to the peoples a pure lip, so that they will call upon His name and serve Him with one shoulder (iii. 8, 9). The idolaters, the wicked, and the despisers of God will be destroyed out of Judah and Jerusalem, that the righteousness of Jehovah may come to the day (iii. 1–7). The humble, who do God's righteousness, are to seek Jehovah, to strive after righteousness and humility, and to wait for the Lord, for the day when He will arise, to procure for Himself worshippers of His name among the nations through the medium of the judgment, and to gather together His dispersed people, and make the remnant of Israel into a sanctified and blessed people of God (iii. 11–20).

It is in this comprehensive character of his prophecy that we find the reason why Zephaniah neither names, nor minutely describes, the executors of the judgment upon Judah, and even in the description of the judgment to be inflicted upon the heathen nations (ch. ii. 4–15) simply individualizes the idea of "*all* the nations of the earth," by naming the nearer and more remote nations to the west and east, the south and north of Judah. He does not predict either this or that particular judgment, but extends and completes in comprehensive generality the judgment, by which God maintains His kingdom on the earth. This peculiarity in Zephaniah's prophecy has been correctly pointed out by Bucer (in his commentary, 1528), when he says of the book before us: "If any one wishes all the secret oracles of the prophets to be given in a brief compendium, let him read through this brief Zephaniah." There are many respects in which Zephaniah links his prophecy to those of the earlier prophets, both in subject-matter and expression; not, however, by resuming those prophecies of theirs which had not been fulfilled, or were not exhausted, during the period of the Assyrian judgment upon the nations, and announcing a fresh and more perfect fulfilment of them by the Chaldæans, but by reproducing in a compendious form the fundamental thoughts

of judgment and salvation which are common to all the prophets, that his contemporaries may lay them to heart; in doing which he frequently appropriates striking words and pregnant expressions taken from his predecessors, and applies them to his own purpose. Thus, for example, the expression in ch. i. 7 is compiled from earlier prophetic words: "Be silent before the Lord Jehovah (from Hab. ii. 20), for the day of Jehovah is at hand (Joel i. 15 and others); for Jehovah has prepared a sacrificial slaughter (Isa. xxxiv. 6), has consecrated His invited ones (Isa. xiii. 3)." (For further remarks on this point, see my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, p. 307.) In this respect Zephaniah opens the series of the less original prophets of the Chaldæan age of judgment, who rest more upon the earlier types; whilst in more material respects his predecessor Habakkuk acted as pioneer to the prophets of this period.

Ewald's view bears evidence of a strong misapprehension of the nature of prophecy generally, and of the special peculiarities of the prophecy before us. "The book of Zephaniah," he says, "must have originated in a great commotion among the nations, which threw all the kingdoms round about Judah far and wide into a state of alarm, and also threatened to be very dangerous to Jerusalem,"—namely, on account of the invasion of Upper and Hither Asia by the Scythians, which is mentioned by Herodotus in i. 15, 103-6, iv. 10 sqq. For there is not a trace discoverable in the whole book of any great commotion among the nations. The few allusions to the fact that a hostile army will execute the judgment upon Jerusalem and Judah (in ch. i. 12, 13, 16, and iii. 15) do not presuppose anything of the kind; and in the threatening of the judgment upon Philistia, Moab and Ammon, Cush, and Asshur with Nineveh, Jehovah only is named as executing it (ch. ii. 4-15). Moreover, neither Herodotus nor the historical books of the Old Testament mention any conquest of Jerusalem by the Scythians; whilst, even according to the account given by Herodotus, the Scythian hordes neither destroyed Nineveh nor made war upon the Cushites (Æthiopians), as would be predicted by Zephaniah (ii. 12-15), if he had the Scythians in his eye; and lastly, Jeremiah, upon whose prophecies Ewald, Hitzig, and Bertheau have principally based their Scythian hypothesis, knows nothing of the Scythians, but simply expects

and announces that the judgment upon Judah and Jerusalem will come from the Chaldæans. Zephaniah found the historical occasion for his prophecy in the moral depravity of Judah and Jerusalem, in the depth to which his people had fallen in idolatry, and in their obstinate resistance to all the efforts made by the prophets and the pious king Josiah to stem the corruption, and thus avert from Judah the judgment threatened even by Moses and the earlier prophets, of the dispersion of the whole nation among the heathen. On the ground of the condition of his people, and the prophetic testimonies of his predecessors, Zephaniah, under the impulse of the Spirit of God, predicted the near approach of the great and terrible day of Jehovah, which came upon Judah and the heathen nations far and wide through the instrumentality of the Chaldæans. For Nebuchadnezzar laid the foundation of the empire which devastated Judah, destroyed Jerusalem with its temple, and led the degenerate covenant nation into exile. This empire was perpetuated in the empires of the Persians, the Macedonians, and the Romans, which arose after it and took its place, and in whose power Judah continued, even after the return of one portion of the exiles to the land of their fathers, and after the restoration of the temple and the city of Jerusalem during the Persian rule; so that the city of God was trodden down by the heathen even to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, whereby the desolation of the holy land, which continues to the present day, was produced, and the dispersion of the Jews to all quarters of the globe accomplished, and both land and people were laid under the ban, from which Israel can only be liberated by its conversion to Jesus Christ, the Saviour of all nations, and from which it will assuredly be redeemed by virtue of the promise of the faithful covenant God. For the exegetical literature, see my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, pp. 305-6.

EXPOSITION.

THE JUDGMENT UPON ALL THE WORLD, AND UPON JUDAH IN PARTICULAR.—CHAP. I.

The judgment will come upon all the world (vers. 2, 3), and will destroy all the idolaters and despisers of God in Judah and Jerusalem (vers. 4–7), and fall heavily upon sinners of every rank (vers. 8–13). The terrible day of the Lord will burst irresistibly upon all the inhabitants of the earth (vers. 14–18).

Ver. 1 contains the heading, which has been explained in the introduction. Vers. 2 and 3 form the preface.—Ver. 2. "*I will sweep, sweep away everything from the face of the earth, is the saying of Jehovah.* Ver. 3. *I will sweep away man and cattle, sweep away the fowls of heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the offences with the sinners, and I cut off men from the face of the earth, is the saying of Jehovah.*" The announcement of the judgment upon the whole earth not only serves to sharpen the following threat of judgment upon Judah and Jerusalem in this sense, "Because Jehovah judges the whole world, He will punish the apostasy of Judah all the more;" but the judgment upon the whole world forms an integral part of his prophecy, which treats more fully of the execution of the judgment in and upon Judah, simply because Judah forms the kingdom of God, which is to be purified from its dross by judgment, and led on towards the end of its divine calling. As Zephaniah here opens the judgment awaiting Judah with an announcement of a judgment upon the whole world, so does he assign the reason for his exhortation to repentance in ch. ii., by showing that all nations will succumb to the judgment; and then announces in ch. iii. 9 sqq., as the fruit of the judgment, the conversion of the nations to Jehovah, and the glorification of the kingdom of God. The way to salvation leads through judgment, not only for the world with its enmity against God, but for the degenerate theocracy also. It is only through judgment that the sinful world can be renewed and glorified. The verb אָסַף, the *hiphil* of *sāph*, is strengthened by

the inf. abs. אָסֹף, which is formed from the verb אָסַף, a verb of kindred meaning. *Sūph* and *'âsaph* signify to take away, to sweep away, *hiph.* to put an end, to destroy. *Kōl*, everything, is specified in ver. 3: men and cattle, the birds of heaven, and the fishes of the sea; the verb *'âsēph* being repeated before the two principal members. This specification stands in unmistakeable relation to the threatening of God: to destroy all creatures for the wickedness of men, from man to cattle, and to creeping things, and even to the fowls of the heaven (Gen. vi. 7). By playing upon this threat, Zephaniah intimates that the approaching judgment will be as general over the earth, and as terrible, as the judgment of the flood. Through this judgment God will remove or destroy the offences (stumbling-blocks) together with the sinners. אֵת before הָרְשָׁעִים cannot be the sign of the accusative, but can only be a preposition, with, together with, since the objects to אָסַף are all introduced without the sign of the accusative; and, moreover, if 'אֵת־הרש were intended for an accusative, the copula *Vâv* would not be omitted. *Hammakhshēlôth* does not mean houses about to fall (Hitzig), which neither suits the context nor can be grammatically sustained, since even in Isa. iii. 6 *hammakhshēlâh* is not the fallen house, but the state brought to ruin by the sin of the people; and *makhshēlâh* is that against which or through which a person meets with a fall. *Makhshēlōth* are all the objects of coarser and more refined idolatry, not merely the idolatrous images, but all the works of wickedness, like τὰ σκάνδαλα in Matt. xiii. 41. The judgment, however, applies chiefly to men, *i.e.* to sinners, and hence in the last clause the destruction of men from off the earth is especially mentioned. The irrational creation is only subject to φθορά, on account of and through the sin of men (Rom. viii. 20 sqq.).

Vers. 4–7. The judgment coming upon the whole earth with all its inhabitants will fall especially upon Judah and Jerusalem. Ver. 4. "*And I stretch my hand over Judah, and over all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and cut off from this place the remnant of Baal, the name of the consecrated servants, together with the priests.* Ver. 5. *And those who worship the army of heaven upon the roofs, and the worshippers who swear to Jehovah, and who swear by their king.* Ver. 6. *And those who draw back from Jehovah, and who did not seek Jehovah, and did not inquire*

for Him." God stretches out His hand (יָד) or His arm (זְרוֹעַ) to smite the ungodly with judgments (compare ch. vi. 6, Deut. iv. 34, v. 15, with Isa. v. 25, ix. 11, 16, 20, x. 4, xiv. 26 sqq.). Through the judgment upon Judah and Jerusalem He will cut off שְׁאָר הַבַּעַל, the remnant of Baal, *i.e.* all that remains of Baal and of idolatry; for Baal or the Baal-worship stands *per synecdochen* for idolatry of every kind (see at Hos. ii. 10). The emphasis lies upon "the remnant," all that still exists of the Baal-worship or idolatry, even to the very last remnant; so that the emphasis presupposes that the extermination has already begun, that the worship of Baal no longer exists in undiminished force and extent. It must not be limited, however, to the complete abolition of the outward or grosser idolatry, but includes the utter extermination of the grosser as well as the more refined Baal-worship. That the words should be so understood is required by the parallel clause: the name of the consecrated servants together with the priests. *Kᵉmârîm* are not prophets of Baal, but, as in 2 Kings xxiii. 5 and Hos. x. 5, the priests appointed by the kings of Judah for the worship of the high places and the idolatrous worship of Jehovah (for the etymology of the word, see at 2 Kings xxiii. 5). The *kōhănîm*, as distinguished from these, are idolatrous priests in the stricter sense of the word (*i.e.* those who conducted the literal idolatry). The names of both the idolatrous priests of Jehovah and the literal priests of the idols are to be cut off, so that not only the persons referred to will disappear, but even their names will be heard no more. Along with the idols and their priests, the worshippers of idols are also to be destroyed. Just as in ver. 4 two classes of priests are distinguished, so in ver. 5 are two classes of worshippers, viz. (1) the star-worshippers, and (2) those who tried to combine the worship of Jehovah and the worship of idols; and to these a third class is added in ver. 6. The worship of the stars was partly Baal-worship, the sun, moon, and stars being worshipped as the bearers of the powers of nature worshipped in Baal and Asherah (see at 2 Kings xxiii. 5); and partly Sabæism or pure star-worship, the stars being worshipped as the originators of all growth and decay in nature, and the leaders and regulators of all sublunary things (see at 2 Kings xxi. 3). The worship took place upon the roofs, *i.e.* on altars erected upon the flat roofs of the houses,

chiefly by the burning of incense (Jer. xix. 13), but also by the offering of sacrifices (2 Kings xxiii. 12; see the comm. *in loc.*). "They offered the sacrifices upon the roofs, that they might be the better able to see the stars in the heavens" (Theodoret). Along with the star-worshippers as the representatives of literal idolatry, Zephaniah mentions as a second class the worshippers who swear partly to Jehovah, and partly by their king, *i.e.* who go limping on two sides (1 Kings xviii. 21), or try to combine the worship of Jehovah with that of Baal. *Malkâm*, their king, is Baal, who is distinctly called king in the inscriptions (see Movers, *Phönizier*, i. pp. 171–2), and not the "earthly king of the nation," as Hitzig has erroneously interpreted the Masoretic text, in consequence of which he proposes to read *milkōm*, *i.e.* Moloch. נִשְׁבַּע with ל signifies to take an oath to Jehovah, *i.e.* to bind one's self on oath to His service; whereas נִשְׁבַּע with בְּ (to swear by a person) means to call upon Him as God when taking an oath. The difference between the two expressions answers exactly to the religious attitude of the men in question, who pretended to be worshippers of Jehovah, and yet with every asseveration took the name of Baal into their mouth. In ver. 6 we have not two further classes mentioned, viz. "the vicious and the irreligious," as Hitzig supposes; but the persons here described form only one single class. Retiring behind Jehovah, drawing back from Him, turning the back upon God, is just the same as not seeking Jehovah, or not inquiring after Him. The persons referred to are the religiously indifferent, those who do not trouble themselves about God, the despisers of God.

This judgment will speedily come. Ver. 7. "*Be silent before the Lord Jehovah! For the day of Jehovah is near, for Jehovah has prepared a slaying of sacrifice, He has consecrated His called.*" The command, "Be silent before the Lord," which is formed after Hab. ii. 20, and with which the prophet summons to humble, silent submission to the judgment of God, serves to confirm the divine threat in vers. 2–6. The reason for the commanding Hush! (keep silence) is given in the statement that the day of Jehovah is close at hand (compare Joel i. 15), and that God has already appointed the executors of the judgment. The last two clauses of the verse are formed from reminiscences taken from Isaiah. The description of the judg-

ment as *zebhach*, a sacrifice, is taken from Isa. xxxiv. 6 (cf. Jer. xlvi. 10 and Ezek. xxxix. 17). The sacrifice which God has prepared is the Jewish nation; those who are invited to this sacrificial meal ("called," 1 Sam. ix. 13) are not beasts and birds of prey, as in Ezek. xxxix. 17, but the nations which He has consecrated to war that they may consume Jacob (Jer. x. 25). The extraordinary use of the verb *hiqdīsh* (consecrated) in this connection may be explained from Isa. xiii. 3, where the nations appointed to make war against Babel are called *m'quddâshīm*, the sanctified of Jehovah (cf. Jer. xxii. 7).

Vers. 8–13. The judgment will fall with equal severity upon the idolatrous and sinners of every rank (vers. 8–11), and no one in Jerusalem will be able to save himself from it (vers. 12, 13). In three double verses Zephaniah brings out three classes of men who differ in their civil position, and also in their attitude towards God, as those who will be smitten by the judgment: viz. (1) the princes, *i.e.* the royal family and superior servants of the king, who imitate the customs of foreigners, and oppress the people (vers. 8, 9); (2) the merchants, who have grown rich through trade and usury (vers. 10, 11); (3) the irreligious debauchees (vers. 12, 13). The first of these he threatens with visitation. Ver. 8. "*And it will come to pass in the day of Jehovah's sacrifice, that I visit the princes and the king's sons, and all who clothe themselves in foreign dress.* Ver. 9. *And I visit every one who leaps over the threshold on that day, those who fill the Lord's house with violence and deceit.*" The enumeration of those who are exposed to the judgment commences with the *princes*, *i.e.* the heads of the tribes and families, who naturally filled the higher offices of state; and the *king's sons*, not only the sons of Josiah, who were still very young (see the Introduction, p. 120), but also the sons of the deceased kings, the royal princes generally. The king himself is not named, because Josiah walked in the ways of the Lord, and on account of his piety and fear of God was not to live to see the outburst of the judgment (2 Kings xxii. 19, 20; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 27, 28). The princes and king's sons are threatened with punishment, not on account of the high position which they occupied in the state, but on account of the ungodly disposition which they manifested. For since the clauses which follow not only mention different classes of men, but also point

out the sins of the different classes, we must also expect this in the case of the princes and the king's sons, and consequently must refer the dressing in foreign clothes, which is condemned in the second half of the verse, to the princes and king's sons also, and understand the word "all" as relating to those who imitated their manners without being actually princes or king's sons. *Malbūsh nokhrī* (foreign dress) does not refer to the clothes worn by the idolaters in their idolatrous worship (Chald., Rashi, Jer.), nor to the dress prohibited in the law, viz. "women dressing in men's clothes, or men dressing in women's clothes" (Deut. xxii. 5, 11), as Grotius maintains, nor to clothes stolen from the poor, or taken from them as pledges; but, as *nokhrī* signifies a foreigner, to foreign dress. Drusius has already pointed this out, and explains the passage as follows: "I think that the reference is to all those who betrayed the levity of their minds by wearing foreign dress. For I have no doubt that in that age some copied the Egyptians in their style of dress, and others the Babylonians, according as they favoured the one nation or the other. The prophet therefore says, that even those who adopted foreign habits, and conformed themselves to the customs of the victorious nation, would not be exempt." The last allusion is certainly untenable, and it would be more correct to say with Strauss: "The prophets did not care for externals of this kind, but it was evident to them that 'as the dress, so the heart;' that is to say, the clothes were witnesses in their esteem of the foreign inclinations of the heart." In ver. 9*a* many commentators find a condemnation of an idolatrous use of foreign customs; regarding the leaping over the threshold as an imitation of the priests of Dagon, who adopted the custom, according to 1 Sam. v. 5, of leaping over the threshold when they entered the temple of that idol. But an imitation of that custom could only take place in temples of Dagon, and it appears perfectly inconceivable that it should have been transferred to the threshold of the king's palace, unless the king was regarded as an incarnation of Dagon,—a thought which could never enter the minds of Israelitish idolaters, since even the Philistian kings did not hold themselves to be incarnations of their idols. If we turn to the second hemistich, the thing condemned is the filling of their masters' houses with violence; and this certainly does not stand in any conceivable

relation to that custom of the priests of Dagon; and yet the words "who fill," etc., are proved to be explanatory of the first half of the verse, by the fact that the second clause is appended without the copula *Vav*, and without the repetition of the preposition עַל. Now, if a fresh sin were referred to here, the copula *Vav*, at all events, could not have been omitted. We must therefore understand by the leaping over the threshold a violent and sudden rushing into houses to steal the property of strangers (Calvin, Ros., Ewald, Strauss, and others), so that the allusion is to "dishonourable servants of the king, who thought that they could best serve their master by extorting treasures from their dependants by violence and fraud" (Ewald). אֲדֹנֵיהֶם, of their lord, *i.e.* of the king, not "of their lords:" the plural is in the *pluralis majestatis*, as in 1 Sam. xxvi. 16, 2 Sam. ii. 5, etc.

Even the usurers will not escape the judgment. Ver. 10. "*And it will come to pass in that day, is the saying of Jehovah, voice of the cry from the fish-gate, and howling from the lower city, and great destruction from the hills.* Ver. 11. *Howl, inhabitants of the mortar, for all the people of Canaan are destroyed; cut off are all that are laden with silver.*" In order to express the thought that the judgment will not spare any one class of the population, Zephaniah depicts the lamentation which will arise from all parts of the city. קוֹל צְעָקָה, voice of the cry, *i.e.* a loud cry of anguish will arise or resound. The fish-gate (according to Neh. iii. 3, xii. 39; cf. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 14) was in the eastern portion of the wall which bounded the lower city on the north side (for further details on this point, see at Neh. iii. 3). הַמִּשְׁנֶה (= הָעִיר מִשְׁנֶה, Neh. xi. 9), the second part or district of the city, is the lower city upon the hill Acra (see at 2 Kings xxii. 14). *Shebher*, *fragor*, does not mean a cry of murder, but the breaking to pieces of what now exists, not merely the crashing fall of the buildings, like *za'ăqath shebher* in Isa. xv. 5, the cry uttered at the threatening danger of utter destruction. In order to heighten the terrors of the judgment, there is added to the crying and howling of the men the tumult caused by the conquest of the city. "From the hills," *i.e.* "not from Zion and Moriah," but from the hills surrounding the lower city, viz. Bezetha, Gareb (Jer. xxxi. 39), and others. For Zion, the citadel of Jerusalem, is evidently thought of as

the place where the howling of the men and the noise of the devastation, caused by the enemy pressing in from the north and north-west, are heard. *Hammakhtēsh*, the mortar (Prov. xxvii. 22), which is the name given in Judg. xv. 19 to a hollow place in a rock, is used here to denote a locality in Jerusalem, most probably the depression which ran down between Acra on the west and Bezetha and Moriah on the east, as far as the fountain of Siloah, and is called by Josephus "the cheese-maker's valley," and by the present inhabitants *el-Wâd*, *i.e.* the valley, and also the mill-valley. The name "mortar" was probably coined by Zephaniah, to point to the fate of the merchants and men of money who lived there. They who dwell there shall howl, because "all the people of Canaan" are destroyed. These are not Canaanitish or Phœnician merchants, but Judæan merchants, who resembled the Canaanites or Phœnicians in their general business (see at Hos. xii. 8), and had grown rich through trade and usury. *N'tūl keseph*, laden with silver.

The debauchees and rioters generally will also not remain free from punishment. Ver. 12. "*And at that time it will come to pass, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and visit the men who lie upon their lees, who say in their heart, Jehovah does no good, and no evil.* Ver. 13. *Their goods will become plunder, and their houses desolation: they will build houses, and not dwell (therein), and plant vineyards, and not drink their wine.*" God will search Jerusalem with candles, to bring out the irreligious debauchees out of their hiding-places in their houses, and punish them. The visitation is effected by the enemies who conquer Jerusalem. Jerome observes on this passage: "Nothing will be allowed to escape unpunished. If we read the history of *Josephus*, we shall find it written there, that princes and priests, and mighty men, were dragged even out of the sewers, and caves, and pits, and tombs, in which they had hidden themselves from fear of death." Now, although what is stated here refers to the conquest of Jerusalem by Titus, there can be no doubt that similar things occurred at the Chaldæan conquest. The expression to search with candles (cf. Luke xv. 8) is a figure denoting the most minute search of the dwellings and hiding-places of the despisers of God. These are described as men who sit drawn together upon their lees (קָפְאִים, lit. to draw one's self together, to coagulate). The figure is borrowed from

old wine, which has been left upon its lees and not drawn off, and which, when poured into other vessels, retains its flavour, and does not alter its odour (Jer. xlviii. 11), and denotes perseverance or confirmation in moral and religious indifference, "both external quiet, and carelessness, idleness, and spiritual insensibility in the enjoyment not only of the power and possessions bestowed upon them, but also of the pleasures of sin and the worst kinds of lust" (Marck). Good wine, when it remains for a long time upon its lees, becomes stronger; but bad wine becomes harsher and thicker. *Sh'mârîm*, lees, do not denote "sins in which the ungodly are almost stupefied" (Jerome), or "splendour which so deprives a man of his senses that there is nothing left either pure or sincere" (Calvin), but "the impurity of sins, which were associated in the case of these men with external good" (Marck). In the carnal repose of their earthly prosperity, they said in their heart, *i.e.* they thought within themselves, there is no God who rules and judges the world; everything takes place by chance, or according to dead natural laws. They did not deny the existence of God, but in their character and conduct they denied the working of the living God in the world, placing Jehovah on the level of the dead idols, who did neither good nor harm (Isa. xli. 23; Jer. x. 5), whereby they really denied the being of God.[1] To these God will show Himself as the ruler and judge of the world, by giving up their goods (*chêlâm, opes eorum*) to plunder, so that they will experience the truth of the punishments denounced in His word against the despisers of His name (compare Lev. xxvi. 32, 33, Deut. xxviii. 30, 39, and the similar threats in Amos v. 11, Mic. vi. 15).

Vers. 14–18. This judgment will not be delayed. To terrify the self-secure sinners out of their careless rest, Zephaniah now carries out still further the thought only hinted at in ver. 7 of the near approach and terrible character of the

[1] "For neither the majesty of God, nor His government or glory, consists in any imaginary splendour, but in those attributes which so meet together in Him that they cannot be severed from His essence. It is the property of God to govern the world, to take care of the human race, to distinguish between good and evil, to relieve the wretched, to punish all crimes, to restrain unjust violence. And if any one would deprive God of these, he would leave nothing but an idol."—CALVIN.

judgment. Ver. 14. "*The great day of Jehovah is near, near and hasting greatly. Hark! the day of Jehovah, bitterly crieth the hero there.* Ver. 15. *A day of fury is this day, a day of anguish and pressure, a day of devastation and desert, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of cloud and cloudy night.* Ver. 16. *A day of the trumpet and battering, over the fortified cities and high battlements.*" The day of Jehovah is called "the great day" with reference to its effects, as in Joel ii. 11. The emphasis lies primarily, however, upon the *qârôbh* (is near), which is therefore repeated and strengthened by מְהֵר מְאֹד. מַהֵר is not a *piel* participle with the *Mem* dropped, but an adjective form, which has sprung out of the adverbial use of the inf. abs. (cf. Ewald, § 240, *e*). In the second hemistich the terrible character of this day is described. קוֹל before *yôm Y'hôvâh* (the day of Jehovah), at the head of an interjectional clause, has almost grown into an interjection (see at Isa. xiii. 4). The hero cries bitterly, because he cannot save himself, and must succumb to the power of the foe. *Shâm, adv. loci*, has not a temporal signification even here, but may be explained from the fact that in connection with the day the prophet is thinking of the field of battle, on which the hero perishes while fighting. In order to depict more fully the terrible character of this day, Zephaniah crowds together in vers. 15 and 16 all the words supplied by the language to describe the terrors of the judgment. He first of all designates it as *yôm 'ebhrâh*, the day of the overflowing wrath of God (cf. ver. 18); then, according to the effect which the pouring out of the wrath of God produces upon men, as a day of distress and pressure (cf. Job xv. 24), of devastation (שְׁאָה and מְשׁוֹאָה combined, as in Job xxxviii. 27, xxx. 3), and of the darkest cloudy night, after Joel ii. 2; and lastly, in ver. 16, indicating still more closely the nature of the judgment, as a day of the trumpet and the trumpet-blast, *i.e.* on which the clangour of the war-trumpets will be heard over all the fortifications and castles, and the enemy will attack, take, and destroy the fortified places amidst the blast of trumpets (cf. Amos ii. 2). *Pinnôth* are the corners and battlements of the walls of the fortifications (2 Chron. xxvi. 15).

In the midst of this tribulation the sinners will perish without counsel or help. Ver. 17. "*And I make it strait for men, and they will walk like blind men, because they have sinned against*

Jehovah; and their blood will be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Ver. 18. *Even their silver, even their gold, will not be able to save them on the day of Jehovah's fury, and in the fire of His wrath will the whole earth be devoured; for He will make an end, yea a sudden one, to all the inhabitants of the earth.*" וְהַצַּרְתִּי reminds of the threat of Moses in Deut. xxviii. 52, to which Zephaniah alluded in ver. 16. And in הָלְכוּ כַּעִוְרִים the allusion to Deut. xxviii. 29 is also unmistakeable. To walk like the blind, *i.e.* to seek a way out of the trouble without finding one. This distress God sends, because they have sinned against Him, by falling away from Him through idolatry and the transgression of His commandments, as already shown in vers. 4–12. But the punishment will be terrible. Their blood will be poured out like dust. The point of comparison is not the quantity, as in Gen. xiii. 16 and others, but the worthlessness of dust, as in 2 Kings xiii. 7 and Isa. xlix. 23. The blood is thought as little of as the dust which is trodden under foot. *L'chūm*, which occurs again in Job xx. 23, means flesh (as in the Arabic), not food. The verb *shâphakh*, to pour out, is also to be taken *per zeugma* in connection with this clause, though without there being any necessity to associate it with 2 Sam. xx. 10, and regard *l'chūm* as referring to the bowels. For the fact itself, compare 1 Kings xiv. 10 and Jer. ix. 21. In order to cut off all hope of deliverance from the rich and distinguished sinners, the prophet adds in ver. 18: Even with silver and gold will they not be able to save their lives. The enemy will give no heed to this (cf. Isa. xiii. 17; Jer. iv. 30; Ezek. vii. 19) in the day that the Lord will pour out His fury upon the ungodly, to destroy the whole earth with the fire of His wrathful jealousy (cf. Deut. iv. 24). By *kol-hâ'ârets* we might understand the whole of the land of Judah, if we looked at what immediately precedes it. But if we bear in mind that the threat commenced with judgment upon the whole earth (vers. 2, 3), and that it here returns to its starting-point, to round off the picture, there can be no doubt that the whole earth is intended. The reason assigned for this threat in ver. 18*b* is formed after Isa. x. 23; but the expression is strengthened by the use of אַךְ־נִבְהָלָה instead of וְנֶחֱרָצָה, the word found in Isaiah. *Kâlâh:* the finishing stroke, as in Isa. *l.c.* (see at Nah. i. 8). אַךְ, only; equivalent to "not

otherwise than," *i.e.* assuredly. נִבְהָלָה is used as a substantive, and is synonymous with *behâlâh*, sudden destruction, in Isa. lxv. 23. The construction with *'ēth accus.* as in Nah. i. 8.

EXHORTATION TO REPENTANCE IN VIEW OF THE JUDGMENT. —CHAP. II. 1–III. 8.

Zephaniah, having in the previous chapter predicted the judgment upon the whole world, and Judah especially, as being close at hand, now summons his people to repent, and more especially exhorts the righteous to seek the Lord and strive after righteousness and humility, that they may be hidden in the day of the Lord (vers. 1–3). The reason which he gives for this admonition to repentance is twofold: viz. (1) that the Philistians, Moabites, and Ammonites will be cut off, and Israel will take possession of their inheritances (vers. 4–10), that all the gods of the earth will be overthrown, and all the islands brought to worship the Lord, since He will smite the Cushites, and destroy proud Asshur and Nineveh (vers. 11–15); and (2) that even blood-stained Jerusalem, with its corrupt princes, judges, and prophets, will endure severe punishment. Accordingly, the call to repentance is not simply strengthened by the renewed threat of judgment upon the heathen and the ungodly in Judah, but is rather accounted for by the introduction of the thought, that by means of the judgment the heathen nations are to be brought to acknowledge the name of the Lord, and the rescued remnant of Israel to be prepared for the reception of the promised salvation.

Vers. 1–3. Call to conversion.—Ver. 1. "*Gather yourselves together, and gather together, O nation that dost not grow pale.* Ver. 2. *Before the decree bring forth (the day passes away like chaff), before the burning wrath of Jehovah come upon you, before the day of Jehovah's wrath come upon you.* Ver. 3. *Seek Jehovah, all ye humble of the land, who have wrought His right; seek righteousness, seek humility, perhaps ye will be hidden in the day of Jehovah's wrath.*" The summons in ver. 1 is addressed to the whole of Judah or Israel. The verb *qōshēsh*, possibly a *denom.* from *qash*, signifies to gather stubble (Ex. v. 7, 12),

then generally to gather together or collect, *e.g.* branches of wood (Num. xv. 32,,33; 1 Kings xvii. 10); in the *kithpoel,* to gather one's self together, applied to that spiritual gathering which leads to self-examination, and is the first condition of conversion. The attempts of Ewald and Hitzig to prove, by means of doubtful etymological combinations from the Arabic, that the word possesses the meanings, to grow pale, or to purify one's self, cannot be sustained. The *kal* is combined with the *hiphil* for the purpose of strengthening it, as in Hab. i. 5 and Isa. xxix. 9. *Nikhsâph* is the perf. *niphal* in pause, and not a participle, partly because of the לֹא which stands before it (see however Ewald, § 286, *g*), and partly on account of the omission of the article; and *nikhsâph* is to be taken as a relative, "*which* does not turn pale." *Kâsaph* has the meaning "to long," both in the *niphal* (*vid.* Gen. xxxi. 30, Ps. lxxxiv. 3) and *kal* (cf. Ps. xvii. 12, Job xiv. 15). This meaning is retained by many here. Thus Jerome renders it, "*gens non amabilis, i.e. non desiderata a Deo;*" but this is decidedly unsuitable. Others render it "not possessing strong desire," and appeal to the paraphrase of the Chaldee, "a people not wishing to be converted to the law." This is apparently the view upon which the Alex. version rests: *ἔθνος ἀπαίδευτον.* But although *nikhsâph* is used to denote the longing of the soul for fellowship with God in Ps. lxxxiv. 3, this idea is not to be found in the word itself, but simply in the object connected with it. We therefore prefer to follow Grotius, Gesenius, Ewald, and others, and take the word in its primary sense of turning pale at anything, becoming white with shame (cf. Isa. xxix. 22), which is favoured by ch. iii. 15. The reason for the appeal is given in ver. 2, viz. the near approach of the judgment. The resolution brings forth, when that which is resolved upon is realized (for *yâlad* in this figurative sense, see Prov. xxvii. 1). The figure is explained in the second hemistich. The next clause כְּמֹץ וגו׳ does not depend upon בְּטֶרֶם, for in that case the verb would stand at the head with *Vav* cop., but it is a parenthesis inserted to strengthen the admonition: the day comes like chaff, *i.e.* approaches with the greatest rapidity, like chaff driven by the wind: not "the time passes by like chaff" (Hitzig); for it cannot be shown that *yōm* was ever used for time in this sense. *Yōm* is the day of judgment men-

tioned in ch. i. 7, 14, 15; and עָבַר here is not to pass by, but to approach, to come near, as in Nah. iii. 19. For the figure of the chaff, see Isa. xxix. 5. In the second hemistich בְּטֶרֶם is strengthened by לֹא; and חֲרוֹן אַף, the burning of wrath in the last clause, is explained by יוֹם אַף יי, the day of the revelation of the wrath of God.—Ver. 3. But because the judgment will so speedily burst upon them, all the pious especially—*'anvē hâ'ârets*, the quiet in the land, *οἱ πραεῖς* (Amos ii. 7; Isa. xi. 4; Ps. xxxvii. 11)—are to seek the Lord. The humble (*'ănâvīm*) are described as those who do Jehovah's right, *i.e.* who seek diligently to fulfil what Jehovah has prescribed in the law as right. Accordingly, seeking Jehovah is explained as seeking righteousness and humility. The thought is this: they are to strive still more zealously after Jehovah's right, viz. righteousness and humility (cf. Deut. xvi. 20; Isa. li. 1, 7); then will they probably be hidden in the day of wrath, *i.e.* be pardoned and saved (cf. Amos v. 15). This admonition is now still further enforced from ver. 4 onwards by the announcement of the coming of judgment upon all the heathen, that the kingdom of God may attain completion.

Vers. 4–7. Destruction of the Philistines.—Ver. 4. "*For Gaza will be forgotten, and Ashkelon become a desert; Ashdod, they drive it out in broad day, and Ekron will be ploughed out.* Ver. 5. *Woe upon the inhabitants of the tract by the sea, the nation of the Cretans! The word of Jehovah upon you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines! I destroy thee, so that not an inhabitant remains.* Ver. 6. *And the tract by the sea becomes pastures for shepherds' caves, and for folds of sheep.* Ver. 7. *And a tract will be for the remnant of the house of Judah; upon them will they feed: in the houses of Ashkelon they encamp in the evening; for Jehovah their God will visit them, and turn their captivity.*" The fourth verse, which is closely connected by *kī* (for) with the exhortation to repentance, serves as an introduction to the threat of judgment commencing with *hōi* in ver. 5. As the mentioning of the names of the four Philistian capitals (see at Josh. xiii. 3) is simply an individualizing periphrasis for the Philistian territory and people, so the land and people of Philistia are mentioned primarily for the purpose of individualizing, as being the representatives of the heathen world by which Judah was surrounded; and it is not till afterwards, in

the further development of the threat, that the enumeration of certain near and remote heathen nations is appended, to express more clearly the idea of the heathen world as a whole. Of the names of the Philistian cities Zephaniah makes use of two, *'Azzâh* and *'Eqrōn*, as a play upon words, to express by means of paronomasia the fate awaiting them. *'Azzâh*, Gaza, will be *'ăzûbhâh*, forsaken, desolate. *'Eqrōn*, Ekron, will be *tē'âqēr*, rooted up, torn out of its soil, destroyed. To the other two he announces their fate in literal terms, the *sh'mâmâh* threatened against Ashkelon corresponding to the *'ăzūbhâh*, and the *gârēsh* predicated of Ashdod preparing the way for Ekron's *tē'âqēr*. בַּצָּהֳרַיִם, at noon, *i.e.* in broad day, might signify, when used as an antithesis to night, "with open violence" (Jerome, Kimchi); but inasmuch as the expulsion of inhabitants is not effected by thieves in the night, the time of noon is more probably to be understood, as v. Cölln and Rosenmüller suppose, as denoting the time of day at which men generally rest in hot countries (2 Sam. iv. 5), in the sense of unexpected, unsuspected expulsion; and this is favoured by Jer. xv. 8, where the devastation at noon is described as a sudden invasion. The omission of Gath may be explained in the same manner as in Amos i. 6–8, from the fact that the parallelism of the clauses only allowed the names of four cities to be given; and this number was amply sufficient to individualize the whole, just as Zephaniah, when enumerating the heathen nations, restricts the number to four, according to the four quarters of the globe: viz. the Philistines in the west (vers. 5–7); the Moabites and Ammonites comprised in one in the east (vers. 8–10); the Cushites in the south (vers. 11, 12); and Asshur, with Nineveh, in the north (north-east), (vers. 13–15). The woe with which the threat is commenced in ver. 5 applies to the whole land and people of the Philistines. *Chebhel*, the measure, then the tract of land measured out or apportioned (see at Deut. iii. 4, xxxii. 9, etc.). The tract of the sea is the tract of land by the Mediterranean Sea which was occupied by the Philistines (*chebhel hayyâm* = *'erets P'lishtīm*). Zephaniah calls the inhabitants *gōi K'rēthīm*, nation of the Cretans, from the name of one branch of the Philistian people which was settled in the south-west of Philistia, for the purpose of representing them as a people devoted to *kârath*, or extermination. The origin of this

name, which is selected both here and in Ezek. xxv. 16 with a play upon the appellative signification, is involved in obscurity; for, as we have already observed at 1 Sam. xxx. 14, there is no valid authority for the derivation which is now current, viz. from the island of *Crete* (see Stark, *Gaza*, pp. 66 and 99 sqq.). דְּבַר יי׳ עֲלֵיכֶם forms an independent sentence: The word of the Lord cometh over you. The nature of that word is described in the next sentence: I will destroy thee. The name *K'na'an* is used in the more limited sense of Philistia, and is chosen to indicate that Philistia is to share the lot of Canaan, and lose its inhabitants by extermination.—Ver. 6. The tract of land thus depopulated is to be turned into "pastures (*n'vōth*, the construct state plural of *nâveh*) of the excavation of shepherds," *i.e.* where shepherds will make excavations or dig themselves huts under the ground as a protection from the sun. This is the simplest explanation of the variously interpreted *k'rōth* (as an inf. of *kârâh*, to dig), and can be grammatically sustained. The digging of the shepherds stands for the excavations which they make. Bochart (*Hieroz.* i. p. 519, ed. Ros.) has already given this explanation: "*Caulæ s. caulis repletus erit effossionis pastorum, i.e. caulæ a pastoribus effossæ in cryptis subterraneis ad vitandum solis æstum.*" On the other hand, the derivation from the noun *kērâh*, in the sense of cistern, cannot be sustained; and there is no proof of it in the fact that *kârâh* is applied to the digging of wells. Still less is it possible to maintain the derivation from יכר (Arab. وكر), by which Ewald would support the meaning nests for *kērōth*, *i.e.* "the small houses or carts of the shepherds." And Hitzig's alteration of the text into כָּרֹת = כָּרִים, pastures, so as to obtain the tautology "meadows of the pastures," is perfectly unwarranted. The word *chebhel* is construed in ver. 6 as a feminine *ad sensum*, with a retrospective allusion to *'erets P'lishtīm*; whereas in ver. 7 it is construed, as it is everywhere else, as a masculine. Moreover, the noun *chebhel*, which occurs in this verse without the article, is not the subject; for, if it were, it would at least have had the article. It is rather a predicate, and the subject must be supplied from ver. 6: "The Philistian tract of land by the sea will become a tract of land or possession for the remnant of the house of Judah, the portion of the people of God rescued

from the judgment. Upon them, viz. these pastures, will they feed." The plural עֲלֵיהֶם does not stand for the neuter, but is occasioned by a retrospective glance at נְוֹת רֹעִים. The subject is, those that are left of the house of Judah. They will there feed their flocks, and lie down in the huts of Ashkelon. For the prophet adds by way of explanation, Jehovah their God will visit them. *Pâqad*, to visit in a good sense, *i.e.* to take them under His care, as is almost always the meaning when it is construed with an accusative of the person. It is only in Ps. lix. 6 that it is used with an *acc. pers.* instead of with עַל, in the sense of to chastise or punish. שׁוּב שְׁבוּת as in Hos. vi. 11 and Amos ix. 14. The *keri* שְׁבִית has arisen from a misinterpretation. On the fulfilment, see what follows.

Vers. 8–10. The judgment upon Moab and Ammon.—Ver. 8. "*I have heard the abuse of Moab, and the revilings of the sons of Ammon, who have abused my nation, and boasted against its boundary.* Ver. 9. *Therefore, as I live, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel: Yea, Moab shall become like Sodom, and the sons of Ammon like Gomorrha, an inheritance of nettles and salt-pits, and desert for ever. The remnant of my nation will plunder them, the residue of my nation will inherit them.* Ver. 10. *Such to them for their pride, that they have despised and boasted against the nation of Jehovah of hosts.*" The threat now turns from the Philistines in the west to the two tribes to the east, viz. the Moabites and Ammonites, who were descended from Lot, and therefore blood-relations, and who manifested hostility to Israel on every possible occasion. Even in the time of Moses, the Moabitish king Balak sought to destroy Israel by means of Balaam's curses (Num. xxii.), for which the Moabites were threatened with extermination (Num. xxiv. 17). In the time of the judges they both attempted to oppress Israel (Judg. iii. 12 sqq. and x. 7 sqq.; cf. 1 Sam. xi. 1–5 and 2 Sam. x.–xii.), for which they were severely punished by Saul and David (1 Sam. xiv. 47, and 2 Sam. viii. 2, xii. 30, 31). The reproach of Moab and the revilings of the Ammonites, which Jehovah had heard, cannot be taken, as Jerome, Rashi, and others suppose, as referring to the hostilities of those tribes towards the Judæans during the Chaldæan catastrophe; nor restricted, as v. Cölln imagines, to the reproaches heaped upon the ten tribes when they were carried away by the Assyrians, since nothing is known

of any such reproaches. The charge refers to the hostile attitude assumed by both tribes at all times towards the nation of God, which they manifested both in word and deed, as often as the latter was brought into trouble and distress. Compare Jer. xlviii. 26, 27; and for *giddēph*, to revile or blaspheme by actions, Num. xv. 30, Ezek. xx. 27; also for the fact itself, the remarks on Amos i. 13–ii. 3. יַגְדִּילוּ עַל גְּבֻ֫, they did great things against their (the Israelites') border (the suffix in *g'bhūlâm*, *their* border, refers to *'ammī*, my people). This great doing consisted in their proudly violating the boundary of Israel, and endeavouring to seize upon Israelitish territory (cf. Amos i. 13). Pride and haughtiness, or high-minded self-exaltation above Israel as the nation of God, is charged against the Moabites and Ammonites by Isaiah and Jeremiah also, as a leading feature in their character (cf. Isa. xvi. 6, xxv. 11; Jer. xlviii. 29, 30). Moab and Ammon are to be utterly exterminated in consequence. The threat of punishment is announced in ver. 9 as irrevocable by a solemn oath. It shall happen to them as to Sodom and Gomorrha. This simile was rendered a very natural one by the situation of the two lands in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea. It affirms the utter destruction of the two tribes, as the appositional description shows. Their land is to become the possession of nettles, *i.e.* a place where nettles grow. *Mimshâq*, ἅπ. λεγ., from the root *mâshaq*, which was not used, but from which *mesheq* in Gen. xv. 2 is derived. *Châr*ūl: the stinging nettle (see at Job xxx. 7), which only flourishes in waste places. *Mikhrēh melach:* a place of salt-pits, like the southern coast of the Dead Sea, which abounds in rock-salt, and to which there is an allusion in the threat of Moses in Deut. xxix. 22. "A desert for ever:" the emphasis lies upon *'ad 'ōlâm* (for ever) here. The people, however, *i.e.* the Moabites and Ammonites themselves, will be taken by the people of Jehovah, and be made their possession. The suffixes attached to יְבָזּוּם and יְנַחֲלוּם can only refer to the people of Moab and Ammon, because a land turned into an eternal desert and salt-steppe would not be adapted for a *nachălâh* (possession) for the people of God. The meaning is not, they will be their heirs through the medium of plunder, but they will make them into their own property, or slaves (cf. Isa. xiv. 2, lxi. 5). גּוֹי is גּוֹי with the suffix of the first person, only one of the two י being written. In ver. 10 the

threat concludes with a repetition of the statement of the guilt which is followed by such a judgment.

The fulfilment or realization of the threat pronounced upon Philistia, Moab, and Ammon, we have not to look for in the particular historical occurrences through which these tribes were conquered and subjugated by the Chaldæans, and to some extent by the Jews after the captivity, until they eventually vanished from the stage of history, and their lands became desolate, as they still are. These events can only come into consideration as preliminary stages of the fulfilment, which Zephaniah completely passes by, since he only views the judgment in its ultimate fulfilment. We are precluded, moreover, from taking the words as relating to that event by the circumstance, that neither Philistia on the one hand, nor Moabites and Ammonites on the other, were ever taken permanent possession of by the Jews; and still less were they ever taken by Judah, as the nation of God, for His own property. Judah is not to enter into such possession as this till the Lord turns the captivity of Judah (ver. 7); that is to say, not immediately after the return from the Babylonish captivity, but when the dispersion of Israel among the Gentiles, which lasts till this day, shall come to an end, and Israel, through its conversion to Christ, be reinstated in the privileges of the people of God. It follows from this, that the fulfilment is still in the future, and that it will be accomplished not literally, but spiritually, in the utter destruction of the nations referred to as heathen nations, and opponents of the kingdom of God, and in the incorporation of those who are converted to the living God at the time of the judgment, into the citizenship of the spiritual Israel. Until the eventual restoration of Israel, Philistia will remain an uninhabited shepherds' pasture, and the land of the Moabites and Ammonites the possession of nettles, a place of salt-pits and a desert; just as the land of Israel will for the very same time be trodden down by the Gentiles. The curse resting upon these lands will not be entirely removed till the completion of the kingdom of God on earth. This view is proved to be correct by the contents of ver. 11, with which the prophet passes to the announcement of the judgment upon the nations of the south and north.

Ver. 11. "*Fearful is Jehovah over them, for He destroyeth*

all the gods of the earth; that all the islands of the nations, every one from its place, may worship Him." Whilst עָלֵיהֶם refers to what precedes, the next clause in the reason assigned points to the announcement of judgment upon the remaining nations of the earth in vers. 12 sqq.; so that ver. 11 cannot be taken either as the conclusion of the previous threat, or as the commencement of the following one, but leads from the one to the other. Jehovah is terrible when He reveals Himself in the majesty of Judge of the world. The suffix appended to עָלֵיהֶם does not refer to עִם יְהוָה, but to the לָהֶם in ver. 10, answering to the Moabites and Ammonites. Jehovah proves Himself terrible to these, because He has resolved to destroy all the gods of the earth. *Râzâh*, to make lean; hence to cause to vanish, to destroy. He causes the gods to vanish, by destroying the nations and kingdoms who relied upon these gods. He thereby reveals the nothingness of the gods, and brings the nations to acknowledge His sole deity (Mic. v. 12). The fall of the false gods impels to the worship of the one true God. וְיִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ לוֹ is the consequence, the fruit, and the effect of Jehovah's proving Himself terrible to the nations and their gods. אִיֵּי הַגּוֹיִם, islands of the Gentiles, is an epithet taken from the islands and coast-lands of Europe, to denote the whole of the heathen world (see at Isa. xli. 1). The distributive אִישׁ מִמְּקוֹמוֹ refers to *haggōyīm* as the principal idea, though not in the sense of "every nation," but in that of every individual belonging to the nations. *Mim-m'qōmō*, coming from his place: the meaning is not that the nations will worship Jehovah at their own place, in their own lands, in contradistinction to Mic. iv. 1, Zech. xiv. 16, and other passages, where the nations go on pilgrimage to Mount Zion (Hitzig); but their going to Jerusalem is implied in the *min* (from), though it is not brought prominently out, as being unessential to the thought. With regard to the fulfilment, Bucer has correctly observed, that "the worship of Jehovah on the part of the heathen is not secured without sanguinary wars, that the type may not be taken for the fact itself, and the shadow for the body. . . . But the true completion of the whole in the kingdom of Christ takes place here in spirit and in faith, whilst in the future age it will be consummated in all its reality and in full fruition." Theodoret, on the other hand, is too one-sided in his view, and thinks only of the conversion of

the heathen through the preaching of the gospel. "This prophecy," he says, "has received its true fulfilment through the holy apostles, and the saints who have followed them; . . . and this takes place, not by the law, but by the teaching of the gospel."

Vers. 12–15. After this statement of the aim of the judgments of God, Zephaniah mentions two other powerful heathen nations as examples, to prove that the whole of the heathen world will succumb to the judgment. Ver. 12. "*Ye Cushites also, slain of my sword are they.* Ver. 13. *And let him stretch out his hand toward the south, and destroy Asshur; and make Nineveh a barren waste, a dry place, like the desert.* Ver. 14. *And herds lie down in the midst of it, all kinds of beasts in crowds: pelicans also and hedgehogs will lodge on their knobs; the voice of the singer in the window; heaps upon the threshold: for their cedar-work hath He made bare.* Ver. 15. *This the city, the exulting one, the safely dwelling one, which said in her heart, I, and no more: how has she become a desolation, a lair of beasts! Every one that passeth by it will hiss, swing his hand.*" As a representative of the heathen dwelling in the south, Zephaniah does not mention Edom, which bordered upon Judah, or the neighbouring land of Egypt, but the remote Ethiopia, the furthest kingdom or people in the south that was known to the Hebrews. The Ethiopians will be slain of the sword of Jehovah. הֵמָּה does not take the place of the copula between the subject and predicate, any more than הוּא in Isa. xxxvii. 16 and Ezra v. 11 (to which Hitzig appeals in support of this usage: see Delitzsch, on the other hand, in his *Comm. on Isaiah, l.c.*), but is a predicate. The prophecy passes suddenly from the form of address (in the second person) adopted in the opening clause, to a statement concerning the Cushites (in the third person). For similar instances of sudden transition, see ch. iii. 18, Zech. iii. 8, Ezek. xxviii. 22.[1] חַלְלֵי חַרְבִּי is a reminiscence from Isa. lxvi. 16: slain by Jehovah with the sword. Zephaniah says nothing further concerning this distant nation, which had not come into any hostile collision with Judah in his day; and only mentions it to exemplify the thought that

[1] Calvin correctly says: "The prophet commences by driving them, in the second person, to the tribunal of God, and then adds in the third person, 'They will be,' etc."

all the heathen will come under the judgment. The fulfilment commenced with the judgment upon Egypt through the Chaldæans, as is evident from Ezek. xxx. 4, 9, as compared with Josephus, *Ant.* x. 11, and continues till the conversion of that people to the Lord, the commencement of which is recorded in Acts viii. 27–38. The prophet dwells longer upon the heathen power of the north, the Assyrian kingdom with its capital Nineveh, because Assyria was then the imperial power, which was seeking to destroy the kingdom of God in Judah. This explains the fact that the prophet expresses the announcement of the destruction of this power in the form of a wish, as the use of the contracted forms *yēt* and *yâsēm* clearly shows. For it is evident that Ewald is wrong in supposing that וַיֵּט stands for וַיֶּט, or should be so pointed, inasmuch as the historical tense, "there He stretched out His hand," would be perfectly out of place. נָטָה יָד (to stretch out a hand), as in ch. i. 4. *ʿAl tsâphōn*, over (or against) the north. The reference is to Assyria with the capital Nineveh. It is true that this kingdom was not to the north, but to the north-east, of Judah; but inasmuch as the Assyrian armies invaded Palestine from the north, it is regarded by the prophets as situated in the north. On Nineveh itself, see at Jonah i. 2 (vol. i. p. 390); and on the destruction of this city and the fall of the Assyrian empire, at Nah. iii. 19 (p. 42). *Lishmâmâh* is strengthened by the apposition *tsiyyâh kammidbâr*. Nineveh is not only to become a steppe, in which herds feed (Isa. xxvii. 10), but a dry, desolate waste, where only desert animals will make their home. *Tsiyyâh*, the dry, arid land—the barren, sandy desert (cf. Isa. xxxv. 1). בְּתוֹכָהּ, in the midst of the city which has become a desert, there lie flocks, not of sheep and goats (צֹאן, ver. 6; cf. Isa. xiii. 20), but כָּל־חַיְתוֹ־גוֹי, literally of all the animals of the (or a) nation. The meaning can only be, "all kinds of animals in crowds or in a mass." גּוֹי is used here for the mass of animals, just as it is in Joel i. 6 for the multitude of locusts, and as עַם is in Prov. xxx. 35, 36 for the ant-people; and the genitive is to be taken as in apposition. Every other explanation is exposed to much greater objections and difficulties. For the form חַיְתוֹ, see at Gen. i. 24. Pelicans and hedgehogs will make their homes in the remains of the ruined buildings (see at Isa. xxxiv. 11, on

which passage Zephaniah rests his description). בְּכַפְתֹּרֶיהָ, upon the knobs of the pillars left standing when the palaces were destroyed (*kaphtōr;* see at Amos ix. 1). The reference to the pelican, a marsh bird, is not opposed to the *tsiyyâh* of ver. 13, since Nineveh stood by the side of streams, the waters of which formed marshes after the destruction of the city. קוֹל יְשׁוֹרֵר cannot be rendered "a voice sings," for *shōrēr*, to sing, is not used for tuning or resounding; but *y'shōrēr* is to be taken relatively, and as subordinate to קוֹל, the voice of him that sings will be heard in the window. Jerome gives it correctly: *vox canentis in fenestra.* There is no necessity to think of the cry of the owl or hawk in particular, but simply of birds generally, which make their singing heard in the windows of the ruins. The sketching of the picture of the destruction passes from the general appearance of the city to the separate ruins, coming down from the lofty knobs of the pillars to the windows, and from these to the thresholds of the ruins of the houses. Upon the thresholds there is *chōrebh*, devastation (= rubbish), and no longer a living being. This is perfectly appropriate, so that there is no necessity to give the word an arbitrary interpretation, or to alter the text, so as to get the meaning a raven or a crow. The description closes with the explanatory sentence: "for He has laid bare the cedar-work," *i.e.* has so destroyed the palaces and state buildings, that the costly panelling of the walls is exposed. *'Arzâh* is a collective, from *'erez*, the cedar-work, and there is no ground for any such alteration of the text as Ewald and Hitzig suggest, in order to obtain the trivial meaning "hews or hacks in pieces," or the cold expression, "He destroys, lays bare." In ver. 15 the picture is rounded off. "This is the city," *i.e.* this is what happens to the exulting city. עַלִּיזָה, exulting, applied to the joyful tumult caused by the men—a favourite word with Isaiah (cf. Isa. xxii. 2, xxiii. 7, xxiv. 8, xxxii. 13). The following predicates from הַיּוֹשֶׁבֶת to עוֹד are borrowed from the description of Babel in Isa. xlvii. 8, and express the security and self-deification of the mighty imperial city. The *Yod* in *'aphsī* is not paragogical, but a pronoun in the first person; at the same time, *'ephes* is not a preposition, "beside me," since in that case the negation "not one" could not be omitted, but "the non-existence," so that אֶפְסִי = אֵינֶנִּי, I am absolutely no further (see at Isa. xlvii. 8). But how has this

self-deifying pride been put to shame! אַיֵּכָה, an expression of amazement at the tragical turn in her fate. The city filled with the joyful exulting of human beings has become the lair of wild beasts, and every one that passes by expresses his malicious delight in its ruin. *Shâraq*, to hiss, a common manifestation of scorn (cf. Mic. vi. 16; Jer. xix. 8). הֵנִיעַ יָד, to swing the hand, embodying the thought, "Away with her, she has richly deserved her fate."

Ch. iii. 1–8. To give still greater emphasis to his exhortation to repentance, the prophet turns to Jerusalem again, that he may once more hold up before the hardened sinners the abominations of this city, in which Jehovah daily proclaims His right, and shows the necessity for the judgment, as the only way that is left by which to secure salvation for Israel and for the whole world. Ver. 1. "*Woe to the refractory and polluted one, the oppressive city!* Ver. 2. *She has not hearkened to the voice; not accepted discipline; not trusted in Jehovah; not drawn near to her God.* Ver. 3. *Her princes are roaring lions in the midst of her; her judges evening wolves, who spare not for the morning.* Ver. 4. *Her prophets boasters, men of treacheries: her priests desecrate that which is holy, do violence to the law.*" The woe applies to the city of Jerusalem. That this is intended in ver. 1 is indisputably evident from the explanation which follows in vers. 2–4 of the predicates applied to the city addressed in ver. 1. By the position of the indeterminate predicates מוֹרָאָה and נְגוֹאֲלָה before the subject to which the *hōi* refers, the threat acquires greater emphasis. מוֹרָאָה is not formed from the *hophal* of רָאָה (ἐπιφανής, LXX., Cyr., Cocc.), but is the participle *kal* of מָרָא = מָרָה or מָרַר, to straighten one's self, and hold one's self against a person, hence to be rebellious (see Delitzsch on *Job*, vol. ii. p. 2, note). נְגוֹאֲלָה, stained with sins and abominations (cf. Isa. lix. 3). *Yōnâh* does not mean *columba*, but oppressive (as in Jer. xlvi. 16, l. 16, and xxv. 38), as a participle of *yânâh* to oppress (cf. Jer. xxii. 3). These predicates are explained and vindicated in vers. 2–4, viz. first of all מוֹרָאָה in ver. 2. She gives no heed to the voice, *sc.* of God in the law and in the words of the prophets (compare Jer. vii. 28, where קוֹל יְהוָה occurs in the repetition of the first hemistich). The same thing is affirmed in the second clause, "she accepts no chastisement." These two clauses describe the

attitude assumed towards the legal contents of the word of God, the next two the attitude assumed towards its evangelical contents, *i.e.* the divine promises. Jerusalem has no faith in these, and does not allow them to draw her to her God. The whole city is the same, *i.e.* the whole of the population of the city. Her civil and spiritual rulers are no better. Their conduct shows that the city is oppressive and polluted (vers. 3 and 4). Compare with this the description of the leaders in Mic. iii. The princes are lions, which rush with roaring upon the poor and lowly, to tear them in pieces and destroy them (Prov. xxviii. 15; Ezek. xix. 2; Nah. ii. 12). The judges resemble evening wolves (see at Hab. i. 8), as insatiable as wolves, which leave not a single bone till the following morning, of the prey they have caught in the evening. The verb *gâram* is a denom. from *gerem*, to gnaw a bone, *piel* to crush them (Num. xxiv. 8); to gnaw a bone for the morning, is the same as to leave it to be gnawed in the morning. *Gâram* has not in itself the meaning to reserve or lay up (Ges. *Lex.*). The prophets, *i.e.* those who carry on their prophesying without a call from God (see Mic. ii. 11, iii. 5, 11), are *pōchăzīm*, vainglorious, boasting, from *pâchaz*, to boil up or boil over, and when applied to speaking, to overflow with frivolous words. Men of treacheries, *bōg'dōth*, a subst. verb, from *bâgad*, the classical word for faithless adultery or apostasy from God. The prophets proved themselves to be so by speaking the thoughts of their own hearts to the people as revelations from God, and thereby strengthening it in its apostasy from the Lord. The priests profane that which is holy (*qōdesh*, every holy thing or act), and do violence to the law, namely, by treating what is holy as profane, and perverting the precepts of the law concerning holy and unholy (cf. Ezek. xxii. 26).

Jerusalem sins in this manner, without observing that Jehovah is constantly making known to it His own righteousness. Ver. 5. "*Jehovah is just in the midst of her; does no wrong: morning by morning He sets His justice in the light, not failing; but the unjust knoweth no shame.* Ver. 6. *I have cut off nations: their battlements are laid waste; I have devastated their streets, so that no one else passeth over: their cities are laid waste, that there is no man there, not an inhabitant more.*" Ver. 5 is attached adversatively to what precedes without a particle, in

this sense: And yet Jehovah is just *b'qirbâh*, *i.e.* in the midst of the city filled with sinners. The words recal to mind the description of the divine administration in Deut. xxxii. 4, where Jehovah is described as אֵין עָוֶל and יָשָׁר. It follows from this that *tsaddîq* is not to be referred to the fact that God does not leave the sins of the nation unpunished (Ros.), but to the fact that He commits no wrong: so that לֹא יַעֲשֶׂה עַוְלָה is only a negative paraphrase of *tsaddîq*. His justice, *i.e.* the righteousness of His conduct, He puts in the light every morning (*babbōqer babbōqer*, used distributively, as in Ex. xvi. 21, Lev. vi. 5, etc.), not by rewarding virtue and punishing wickedness (Hitzig, Strauss, after the Chaldee, Jerome, Theodoret, and Cyril), according to which *mishpât* would signify judgment; but by causing His law and justice to be proclaimed to the nation daily "by prophets, whose labour He employs to teach the nation His laws, and who exert themselves diligently by exhorting and admonishing every day, to call it to bring forth better fruit, but all in vain (Ros., Ewald, etc.; cf. Hos. vi. 5). It is at variance with the context to take these words as referring to the judgments of God. These are first spoken of in ver. 6, and the correspondence between these two verses and vers. 7 and 8 shows that we must not mix up together ver. 5*b* and ver. 6, or interpret ver. 5*b* from ver. 6. Just as the judgment is threatened there (ver. 8) because the people have accepted no correction, and have not allowed themselves to be moved to the fear of Jehovah, so also in vers. 5 and 6 the prophet demonstrates the righteousness of God from His double administration: viz. first, from the fact that He causes His justice to be proclaimed to the people, that they may accept correction; and secondly, by pointing to the judgments upon the nations. לֹא נֶעְדָּר paraphrases the idea of "infallibly;" the literal meaning is, that there is no morning in which the justice is wanting. Hitzig, Strauss, and others have rendered it quite unsuitably, "God does not suffer Himself to be wanting," *i.e.* does not remain absent. But the perverse one, viz. the nation sunk in unrighteousness, knows no disgrace, to make it ashamed of its misdeeds. In ver. 6 Jehovah is introduced as speaking, to set before the nations in the most impressive manner the judgments in which He has manifested His righteousness. The two hemistichs are formed uniformly,

each consisting of two clauses, in which the direct address alternates with an indefinite, passive construction: I have cut off nations, their battlements have been laid waste, etc. *Gōyīm* are neither those nations who are threatened with ruin in ch. ii. 4–15, nor the Canaanites, who have been exterminated by Israel, but nations generally, which have succumbed to the judgments of God, without any more precise definition. *Pinnōth*, the battlements of the fortress-walls and towers (i. 16), stand *per synecdochen* for castles or fortifications. *Chūtsōth* are not streets of the city, but roads, and stand synecdochically for the flat country. This is required by the correspondence of the clauses. For just as the cities answer to the castles, so do *chūtsōth* to the nations. *Nitsdū*, from *tsâdâh*, not in the sense of waylaying (Ex. xxi. 13; 1 Sam. xxiv. 12), but in accordance with Aramæan usage, to lay waste, answering to *nâshammū*, for which Jeremiah uses *nitt'tsū* in ch. iv. 26.

In vers. 7 and 8 the prophet sums up all that he has said in vers. 1–6, to close his admonition to repentance with the announcement of judgment. Ver. 7. "*I said, Only do thou fear me, do thou accept correction, so will their dwelling not be cut off, according to all that I have appointed concerning them: but they most zealously destroyed all their doings.* Ver. 8. *Therefore wait for me, is the saying of Jehovah, for the day when I rise up to the prey; for it is my right to gather nations together, to bring kingdoms in crowds, to heap upon them my fury, all the burning of my wrath: for in the fire of my zeal will the whole earth be devoured.*" God has not allowed instruction and warning to be wanting, to avert the judgment of destruction from Judah; but the people have been getting worse and worse, so that now He is obliged to make His justice acknowledged on earth by means of judgments. אָמַרְתִּי, not I thought, but I said. This refers to the strenuous exertions of God to bring His justice to the light day by day (ver. 5), and to admonitions of the prophets in order to bring the people to repentance. תִּירְאִי and תִּקְחִי are cohortatives, chosen instead of imperatives, to set forth the demand of God by clothing it in the form of entreating admonition as an emanation of His love. *Lâqach mūsâr* as in ver. 2. The words are addressed to the inhabitants of Jerusalem personified as the daughter of Zion (ver. 11); and מְעוֹנָהּ, her dwelling, is the city of Jerusalem,

not the temple, which is called the dwelling-place of Jehovah indeed, but never the dwelling-place of the nation, or of the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The clause which follows, and which has been very differently interpreted, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר פָּקַדְתִּי עָלֶיהָ, can hardly be taken in any other way than that in which Ewald has taken it, viz. by rendering *kōl* as the accusative of manner: according to all that I have appointed, or as I have appointed everything concerning them. For it is evidently impracticable to connect it with what precedes as *asyndeton*, because the idea of יָבוֹא cannot be taken *per zeugma* from יִכָּרֵת, and we should necessarily have to supply that idea. For *hikkârēth* does not in any way fit in with אֲשֶׁר פָּקַדְתִּי, whether we take פָּקַד עַל in the sense of charge, command, appoint (after Job xxxiv. 13, xxxvi. 23), or in that of correct, punish. For the thought that God will cut off all that He has appointed concerning Jerusalem, would be just as untenable as the thought that He will exterminate the sins that have been punished in Jerusalem. But instead of repenting, the people have only shown themselves still more zealous in evil deeds. *Hishkīm*, to rise early, then in connection with another verb, adverbially: early and zealously. *Hishchīth*, to act corruptly; and with *'ălīlōth*, to complete corrupt and evil deeds (cf. Ps. xiv. 1). Jehovah must therefore interpose with punishment.—Ver. 8. With the summons *chakkū lī*, wait for me, the prophecy returns to its starting-point in vers. 2 and 3, to bring it to a close. The persons addressed are *kol 'anvē hâ'ârets*, whom the prophet has summoned in the introduction to his exhortation to repentance (ch. ii. 3), to seek the Lord and His righteousness. The Lord calls upon them, to wait for Him. For the nation as such, or those who act corruptly, cannot be addressed, since in that case we should necessarily have to take *chakkū lī* as ironical (Hitzig, Maurer); and this would be at variance with the usage of the language, inasmuch as *chikkâh lay'hōvâh* is only used for waiting in a believing attitude for the Lord and His help (Ps. xxxiii. 20; Isa. viii. 17, xxx. 18, lxiv. 3). The *lī* is still more precisely defined by לְיוֹם וגו׳; for the day of my rising up for prey. לָעַד does not mean εἰς μαρτύριον = לָעֵד (LXX., Syr.), or for a witness (Hitzig), which does not even yield a suitable thought apart from the alteration in the pointing, unless we "combine with the witness the accuser and

judge" (Hitzig), or, to speak more correctly, make the witness into a judge; nor does לְעַד stand for לָעַד, *in perpetuum*, as Jerome has interpreted it after Jewish commentators, who referred the words to the coming of the Messiah, "who as they hope will come, and, as they say, will devour the earth with the fire of His zeal when the nations are gathered together, and the fury of the Lord is poured out upon them." For "the rising up of Jehovah for ever" cannot possibly denote the coming of the Messiah, or be understood as referring to the resurrection of Christ, as Cocceius supposes, even if the judgment upon the nations is to be inflicted through the Messiah. לְעַד means "for prey," that is to say, it is a concise expression for taking prey, though not in the sense suggested by Calvin: "Just as lions seize, tear in pieces, and devour; so will I do with you, because hitherto I have spared you with too much humanity and paternal care." This neither suits the expression *chakkū lī*, according to the only meaning of *chikkâh* that is grammatically established, nor the verses which follow (vers. 9, 10), according to which the judgment to be inflicted upon the nations by the Lord is not an exterminating but a refining judgment, through which He will turn to the nations pure lips, to call upon His name. The prey for which Jehovah will rise up, can only consist, therefore, in the fact, that through the judgment He obtains from among the nations those who will confess His name, so that the souls from among the nations which desire salvation fall to Him as prey (compare Isa. liii. 12 with lii. 15 and xlix. 7). It is true that, in order to gain this victory, it is necessary to exterminate by means of the judgment the obstinate and hardened sinners. "For my justice (right) is to gather this." *Mishpât* does not mean *judicium*, judgment, here; still less does it signify *decretum*, a meaning which it never has; but justice or right, as in ver. 5. My justice, *i.e.* the justice which I shall bring to the light, consists in the fact that I pour my fury upon all nations, to exterminate the wicked by judgments, and to convert the penitent to myself, and prepare for myself worshippers out of all nations. לִשְׁפֹּךְ is governed by לֶאֱסֹף וגו׳. God will gather together the nations, to sift and convert them by severe judgments. To give the reason for the terrible character and universality of the judgment, the thought is repeated from ch. i. 18 that "all the earth shall be devoured

in the fire of His zeal." In what follows, the aim and fruit of the judgment are given; and this forms an introduction to the announcement of salvation.

PROMISE OF THE CONVERSION OF THE NATIONS AND GLORIFICATION OF ISRAEL.—CHAP. III. 9–20.

The confessors of His name, whom the Lord will procure for Himself among the nations through the medium of the judgment, will offer to Him His dispersed nation as a sacrifice (vers. 9, 10). And the rescued remnant of Israel, in their humility, will trust in the Lord, and under the pastoral fidelity of their God have no more foe to fear, but rejoicing in the blessed fellowship of the Lord, be highly favoured and glorified (vers. 11–20).

Ver. 9. "*For then will I turn to the nations a pure lip, that they may all call upon the name of Jehovah, to serve Him with one shoulder.* Ver. 10. *From beyond the rivers of Cush will they bring my worshippers, the daughter of my dispersed ones, as a meat-offering to me.*" By the explanatory *kī* the promise is connected with the threat of judgment. The train of thought is this: the believers are to wait for the judgment, for it will bring them redemption. The first clause in ver. 9 is explained in different ways. Many commentators understand by *sâphâh bhe'rūrâh* the lip of God, which He will turn to the nations through His holy servants. According to this view, Luther has adopted the rendering: "Then will I cause the nations to be preached to otherwise, with friendly lips, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord." But this view, which has been defended by Cocceius, Mark, and Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, ii. 2, pp. 573–4), would only be admissible if *bârūr* signified clear, evident,—a meaning which Hofmann assumes as the ground of his explanation: "A clear, easily intelligible, unmistakeable language does God turn to the nations, to call them all in the name of Jehovah, that they may serve Him as one man." But, apart from the inadmissible rendering of קְרֹא בְשֵׁם יי, this explanation is proved to be erroneous by the fact that *bârūr* does not mean clear, intelligible; that even in

Job xxxiii. 3 it has not this meaning; but that it simply means pure, purified, sinless; and that *sâphâh bh'rûrâh*, the opposite of טְמֵא שְׂפָתַיִם in Isa. vi. 5, cannot be used at all of the lip or language of God, but simply of the lip of a man who is defiled by sin. Consequently הָפַךְ אֶל must be explained according to 1 Sam. x. 9, since the circumstance that we have הָפַךְ לְ in this passage does not make any material difference in the meaning. The construction in both passages is a pregnant one. God turns to the nations a pure lip, by purifying their sinful lips, *i.e.* He converts them, that they may be able to call upon Him with pure lips. Lip does not stand for language, but is mentioned as the organ of speech, by which a man expresses the thoughts of his heart, so that purity of the lips involves or presupposes the purification of the heart. The lips are defiled by the names of the idols whom they have invoked (cf. Hos. ii. 19, Ps. xvi. 4). The fruit of the purification is this, that henceforth they call upon the name of Jehovah, and serve Him. קָרָא בְּשֵׁם יי, when used of men, always signifies to call solemnly or heartily upon the name of Jehovah. To serve *sh'khem 'echâd*, with one shoulder, is to serve together or with unanimity. The metaphor is taken from bearers who carry a burden with even shoulders; cf. Jer. xxxii. 39. As an example of the way in which they will serve the Lord, it is stated in ver. 10 that they will offer the widely scattered members of the Israelitish church as a sacrifice to the Lord. Compare Isa. lxvi. 20, where this thought is applied to the heathen of all quarters of the globe; whereas Zephaniah, while fixing his eye upon that passage, has given it more briefly, and taken the expression "from beyond the rivers of Cush" from Isa. xviii. 1, for the purpose of naming the remotest heathen nations *instar omnium*. The rivers of Cush are the Nile and the Astaboras, with their different tributaries. עָתָרַי בַּת פּוּצַי is the accusative of the nearest object, and מִנְחָתִי that of the more remote. *'Athâr* does not mean fragrance (Ges., Ewald, Maurer), but worshipper, from *'âthar*, to pray, to entreat. The worshippers are more precisely defined by *bath pûtsai*, the daughter of my dispersed ones (*pûts*, part. pass.), *i.e.* the crowd or congregation consisting of the dispersed of the Lord, the members of the Israelitish congregation of God scattered about in all the world. They are presented to the Lord by the converted Gen-

tiles as *minchâh*, a meat-offering, *i.e.* according to Isa. lxvi. 20, just as the children of Israel offered a meat-offering. In the symbolism of religious worship, the presentation of the meat-offering shadowed forth diligence in good works as the fruit of justification. The meaning is therefore the following: The most remote of the heathen nations will prove that they are worshippers of Jehovah, by bringing to Him the scattered members of His nation, or by converting them to the living God. We have here in Old Testament form the thought expressed by the Apostle Paul in Rom. xi., namely, that the Gentiles have been made partakers of salvation, that they may incite to emulation the Israelites who have fallen away from the call of divine grace. The words of the prophet treat of the blessing which will accrue, from the entrance of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God, to the Israelites who have been rejected on account of their guilt, and refer not only to the missionary work of Christians among the Jews in the stricter sense of the term, but to everything that is done, both directly and indirectly, through the rise and spread of Christianity among the nations, for the conversion of the Jews to the Saviour whom they once despised. Their complete fulfilment, however, will only take place after the *pleroma* of the Gentiles has come in, when the πώρωσις, which in part has happened to Israel, shall be removed, and "all Israel" shall be saved (Rom. xi. 25, 26). On the other hand, Mark, Hitzig, and others, have taken *'ăthârai bath pūtsai* as the subject, and understand it as referring to the heathen who have escaped the judgment by flying in all directions to their own homes, for example even to Cush, and who having become converted, offer to the Lord the gift that is His due. But, apart from the parallel passage in Isa. lxvi. 20, which alone is quite decisive, this view is proved to be untenable by *bath pūtsai*, daughter of *my* dispersed ones. The thought that Jehovah disperses the heathen, either at the judgment or through the judgment, is foreign to the whole of the Old Testament, as Hitzig himself appears to have felt, when he changed *pūts*, to disperse, into its very opposite—namely, to come home. The thought, on the other hand, that God will disperse His people Israel among all nations on account of their sins, and will hereafter gather them together again, is a truth expressed even in the song of Moses,

and one which recurs in all the prophets, so that every hearer or reader of our prophet must think at once of the Israel scattered abroad in connection with the expression "my (*i.e.* Jehovah's) dispersed ones." The objection, that Judah is first spoken of in ver. 11 (Hitzig), is thereby deprived of all its significance, even if this really were the case. But the objection is also incorrect, since the Judæans have been already addressed in ver. 8 in the expression חַכּוּ לִי.

Ver. 11. "*In that day wilt thou not be ashamed of all thy doings, wherewith thou hast transgressed against me; for then will I remove from the midst of thee those that rejoice in thy pride, and thou wilt no more pride thyself upon my holy mountain.* Ver. 12. *And I leave in the midst of thee a people bowed down and poor, and they trust in the name of Jehovah.* Ver. 13. *The remnant of Israel will not do wrong, and not speak lies, and there will not be found in their mouth a tongue of deceit; for they will feed, and rest, and no one will terrify them.*" The congregation, being restored to favour, will be cleansed and sanctified by the Lord from every sinful thing. The words of ver. 11 are addressed to the Israel gathered together from the dispersion, as the daughter of Zion (cf. ver. 14). "In that day" refers to the time of judgment mentioned before, viz. to the day when Jehovah rises up for prey (ver. 8). לֹא תֵבוֹשִׁי, thou wilt not need to be ashamed of all thine iniquities; because, as the explanatory clauses which follow clearly show, they occur no more. This is the meaning of the words, and not, as Ewald imagines, that Jerusalem will no more be bowed down by the recollection of them. The perfect אֲשֶׁר פָּשַׁעַתְּ does indeed point to the sins of former times; not to the recollection of them, however, but to the commission of them. For the proud and sinners will then be exterminated from the congregation. עַלִּיזֵי גַאֲוָתֵךְ is taken from Isa. xiii. 3, where it denotes the heroes called by Jehovah, who exult with pride caused by the intoxication of victory; whereas here the reference is to the haughty judges, priests, and prophets (vers. 3 and 4), who exult in their sinful ways. גַּבְהָה a feminine form of the infinitive, like *moshchâh* in Ex. xxix. 29, etc. (cf. Ges. § 45, 1, *b*, and Ewald, § 236, *a*). גָּבַהּ, to be haughty, as in Isa. iii. 16. The prophet mentions pride as the root of all sins. The holy mountain is not Canaan as a mountainous country, but the

temple mountain, as in the parallel passage, Isa. xi. 9. The people left by the Lord, *i.e.* spared in the judgment, and gathered together again out of the dispersion, will be *'ânī* and *dal*. The two words are often connected together as synonyms, *e.g.* Isa. xxvi. 6 and Job xxxiv. 28. עָנִי is not to be confounded with עָנָו, gentle or meek, but signifies bowed down, oppressed with the feeling of impotence for what is good, and the knowledge that deliverance is due to the compassionate grace of God alone; it is therefore the opposite of proud, which trusts in its own strength, and boasts of its own virtue. The leading characteristic of those who are bowed down will be trust in the Lord, the spiritual stamp of genuine piety. This remnant of Israel, the ἐκλογή of the people of God, will neither commit injustice, nor practise wickedness and deceit with word and tongue, will therefore be a holy nation, answering to its divine calling (Ex. xix. 6), just as God does no wrong (ver. 5), and the servant of Jehovah has no deceit in his mouth (Isa. liii. 9). What is stated here can, of course, not refer to those who were brought back from Babylon, as Calvin supposes, taking the words comparatively, because there were many hypocrites among the exiles, and adding, "because the Lord will thus wipe away all stains from His people, that the holiness may then appear all the purer." The prophetic announcement refers to the time of perfection, which commenced with the coming of Christ, and will be completely realized at His return to judgment. Strauss very appropriately compares the words of John, "Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin" (1 John iii. 9). Zephaniah explains what he says, by adding the assurance of the blessing which is promised in the law as the reward of faithful walk in the commandments of the Lord. This reason rests upon the assumption that they only rejoice in the promised blessing who walk in the commandments of God. In this respect the enjoyment of the blessing yields a practical proof that wrong and wickedness occur no more. The words יִרְעוּ וְרָבְצוּ may be explained from the comparison of the remnant of Israel to a flock both in Mic. vii. 14 and Luke xii. 32 ("little flock;" for the fact itself, compare Mic. iv. 4). This blessing is still further developed in what follows, first of all by a reference to the removal of the judgments of God (vers. 14–17), and secondly by the promise of God that

all the obstacles which prevent the enjoyment of the blessing are to be cleared away (vers. 18–20).

Ver. 14. "*Exult, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! rejoice and exult with all the heart, O daughter Jerusalem.* Ver. 15. *Jehovah has removed thy judgments, cleared away thine enemy; the King of Israel, Jehovah, is in the midst of thee: thou wilt see evil no more.* Ver. 16. *In that day will men say to Jerusalem, Fear not, O Zion; let not thy hands drop.* Ver. 17. *Jehovah thy God is in the midst of thee, a hero who helps: He rejoices over thee in delight, He is silent in His love, exults over thee with rejoicing.*" The daughter Zion, *i.e.* the reassembled remnant of Israel, is to exult and shout at the fulness of the salvation prepared for it. The fulness is indicated in the heaping up of words for exulting and rejoicing. The greater the exultation, the greater must the object be over which men exult. הָרִיעוּ, to break out into a cry of joy, is a plural, because the Israel addressed is a plurality. The re-establishment of the covenant of grace assigns the reason for the exultation. God has removed the judgments, and cleared away the enemies, who served as the executors of His judgments. *Pinnâh, piel,* to put in order (*sc.* a house), by clearing away what is lying about in disorder (Gen. xxiv. 31; Lev. xiv. 36), hence to sweep away or remove. *'Oyēbh:* with indefinite generality, every enemy. Now is Jehovah once more in the midst of the daughter Zion as King of Israel, whereas, so long as Israel was given up to the power of the enemy, He had ceased to be its King. *Y'hōvâh* is in apposition to *melekh Yisrâ'ēl,* which is placed first for the sake of emphasis, and not a predicate. The predicate is merely בְּקִרְבֵּךְ (in the midst of thee). The accent lies upon the fact that Jehovah is in the midst of His congregation as King of Israel (cf. ver. 17). Because this is the case, she will no more see, *i.e.* experience, evil (רָאָה as in Jer. v. 12, Isa. xliv. 16, etc.), and need not therefore any longer fear and despair. This is stated in ver. 16: They will say to Jerusalem, Fear not. She will have so little fear, that men will be able to call her the fearless one. צִיּוֹן is a vocative of address. It is simpler to assume this than to supply לְ from the previous clause. The falling of the hands is a sign of despair through alarm and anxiety (cf. Isa. xiii. 7). This thought is still further explained in ver. 17. Jehovah, the

God of Zion, is within her, and is a hero who helps or saves; He has inward joy in His rescued and blessed people (cf. Isa. lxii. 5, lxv. 19). יַחֲרִישׁ בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ appears unsuitable, since we cannot think of it as indicating silence as to sins that may occur (cf. Ps. l. 21, Isa. xxii. 14), inasmuch as, according to ver. 13, the remnant of Israel commits no sin. Ewald and Hitzig would therefore read *yăchădīsh;* and Ewald renders it "he will grow young again," which Hitzig rejects as at variance with the language, because we should then have יְתַחַדֵּשׁ. He therefore takes *yachădīsh* as synonymous with יַעֲשֶׂה חֲדָשׁוֹת, he will do a new thing (Isa. xliii. 19). But this rendering cannot be justified by the usage of the language, and does not even yield a thought in harmony with the context. Silence in His love is an expression used to denote love deeply felt, which is absorbed in its object with thoughtfulness and admiration,[1] and forms the correlate to rejoicing with exultation, *i.e.* to the loud demonstration of one's love. The two clauses contain simply a description, drawn from man's mode of showing love, and transferred to God, to set forth the great satisfaction which the Lord has in His redeemed people, and are merely a poetical filling up of the expression, "He will rejoice over thee with joy." This joy of His love will the Lord extend to all who are troubled and pine in misery.

Ver. 18. "*I gather together those that mourn for the festive meeting; they are of thee; reproach presses upon them.* Ver. 19. *Behold, at that time I will treat with all thine oppressors, and will save the limping, and gather together that which is dispersed, and make them a praise and a name in every land of their shame.* Ver. 20. *At that time will I bring you and gather you in time; for I will make you a name and a praise among all the nations of the earth, when I turn your captivity before your eyes, saith Jehovah.*" The salvation held up in prospect before the remnant of Israel, which has been refined by the judgments and delivered, was at a very remote distance in Zephaniah's time.

1 "He assumes the person of a mortal man, because, unless He stammers in this manner, He cannot sufficiently show how much He loves us. *Thy God will therefore be quiet in His love, i.e.* this will be the greatest delight of thy God, this His chief pleasure, when He shall cherish thee. As a man caresses his dearest wife, so will God then quietly repose in thy love."—CALVIN.

The first thing that awaited the nation was the judgment, through which it was to be dispersed among the heathen, according to the testimony of Moses and all the prophets, and to be refined in the furnace of affliction. The ten tribes were already carried away into exile, and Judah was to share the same fate immediately afterwards. In order, therefore, to offer to the pious a firm consolation of hope in the period of suffering that awaited them, and one on which their faith could rest in the midst of tribulation, Zephaniah mentions in conclusion the gathering together of all who pine in misery at a distance from Zion, and who are scattered far and wide, to assure even these of their future participation in the promised salvation. Every clause of ver. 18 is difficult. נוּגֵי is a *niphal* participle of יָגָה, with נ instead of י, as in Lam. i. 4, in the sense of to mourn, or be troubled. *Mō'ēd*, the time of the feast, when all Israel gathered together to rejoice before Jehovah, as in Hos. xii. 10, except that the word is not to be restricted to the feast of tabernacles, but may be understood as relating to all the feasts to which pilgrimages were made. The preposition *min* is taken by many in the sense of far from; in support of which Hitzig appeals to Lam. i. 4. But that passage is rather opposed to the application of the meaning referred to, inasmuch as we have מִבְּלִי there, in which *min* denotes the cause. And this causal signification is to be retained here also, if only because of the close connection between נוּגֵי and מִמּוֹעֵד, according to which the dependent word can only denote the object or occasion of the *nōgâh*. Those who are troubled for the festal meeting are they who mourn because they cannot participate in the joy of assembling before the face of the Lord, namely, on account of their banishment into foreign lands. *Mimmēkh hâyū*, from thee were they, *i.e.* they have been thine (*min* expressing descent or origin, as in Isa. lviii. 12, Ezra ii. 59, Ps. lxviii. 27; and the whole clause containing the reason for their meeting). The explanation given by Anton and Strauss is unsuitable and forced: "They will be away from thee, namely, separated from thee as mourners." In the last clause it is a matter of dispute to what the suffix in עָלֶיהָ refers. The explanation of Strauss, that it refers to Zion, is precluded by the fact that Zion is itself addressed, both in what precedes and what follows, and the thought does not require so rapid a

change of persons. It is more natural to refer it to נוֹגֵי, in which case the singular suffix is used collectively as a neuter, like the feminines הַצִּלְעָה and הַנִּדָּחָה; and the meaning takes this form: a burden upon them, viz. those who mourned for the feasts, was the reproach, *sc.* of slavery among the heathen (compare ver. 19, at the close). Consequently the clause assigns a still further reason for the promise, that they are to be gathered together. In ver. 19, עֹשֶׂה with אֵת signifies neither to handle in an evil sense, nor *comprimere, conculcare*, but to treat or negotiate with a person, as in Ezek. xxiii. 25 and xvii. 17, where אוֹת, according to a later usage of the language, is a preposition, and not a sign of the accusative. The more precise definition of the procedure, or of the kind of negotiation, is evident from the context. The reference is to a punitive procedure, or treating in wrath. מְעַנַּיִךְ as in Ps. lx. 14, the heathen nations who had subjugated Israel. What follows is taken almost *verbatim* from Mic. iv. 6; and the last clause points back to Deut. xxvi. 19, to tell the people that the Lord will assuredly realize the glorification promised to the people of His possession, and make Israel an object of praise to the whole earth. בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ בָּשְׁתָּם, in all lands, where they have suffered shame. *Boshtâm* is epexegetical of *hâ'ârets*, which governs it; this explains the use of the article with the *nomen regens* (cf. Ewald, § 290, *d*). In order to paint the glory of the future salvation in still more vivid colours before the eyes of the people, the Lord ends by repeating this promise once more, with a slight change in the words. At that time will I lead you. The indefinite אֲבִיא might be expounded from the context, by supplying the place to which God will lead them, after such passages as Isa. xiv. 2, xliii. 5. But it is more natural to think of the phrase, to lead out and in, according to Num. xxvii. 17, and to take אֲבִיא as an abbreviation of וְהֹבִיא הוֹצִיא, picturing the pastoral fidelity with which the Lord will guide the redeemed. The following words קַבְּצִי אֶתְכֶם point to this: compare Isa. xl. 11, where the gathering of the lambs is added to the feeding of the flock, to give prominence to the faithful care of the shepherds for the weak and helpless. קַבְּצִי is the infinitive: my gathering you, *sc.* will take place. The choice of this form is to be traced, as Hitzig supposes, to the endeavour to secure uniformity in the clauses. A fresh reason is then assigned for

the promise, by a further allusion to the glorification appointed for the people of God above all the nations of the earth, coupled with the statement that this will take place at the turning of their captivity, *i.e.* when God shall abolish the misery of His people, and turn it into salvation ("turn the captivity," as in ch. ii. 7), and that "before your eyes;" *i.e.*, not that "ye yourselves shall see the salvation, and not merely your children, when they have closed your eyes" (Hitzig)—for such an antithesis would be foreign to the context—but as equivalent to "quite obviously, so that the turn in events stands out before the eye," analogous to "ye will see eye to eye" (Isa. lii. 8; cf. Luke ii. 30). This will assuredly take place, for Jehovah has spoken it.

On the fulfilment of this promise, Theodoret observes that "these things were bestowed upon those who came from Babylon, and have been offered to all men since then." This no doubt indicates certain points of the fulfilment, but the principal fulfilment is generalized too much. For although the promise retains its perfect validity in the case of the Christian church, which is gathered out of both Jews and Gentiles, and will receive its final accomplishment in the completion of the kingdom of heaven founded by Christ on the earth, the allusion to the Gentile Christians falls quite into the background in the picture of salvation in vers. 11–20, and the prophet's eye is simply directed towards Israel, and the salvation reserved for the rescued ἐκλογὴ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. But inasmuch as Zephaniah not only announces the judgment upon the whole earth, but also predicts the conversion of the heathen nations to Jehovah the living God (ch. iii. 9, 10), we must not restrict the description of salvation in ch. iii. 11–20 to the people of Israel who were lineally descended from Abraham, and to the remnant of them; but must also regard the Gentiles converted to the living God through Christ as included among them, and must consequently say that the salvation which the Lord will procure through the judgment for the daughter Zion or the remnant of Israel, commenced with the founding of the Christian church by the apostles for Judah and the whole world, and has been gradually unfolded more and more through the spread of the name of the Lord and His worship among all nations, and will be eventually and fully realized at the second coming of Christ

to the last judgment, and to perfect His kingdom in the establishment of the New Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. and xxii.). It is true that both the judgment and the salvation of the remnant of Israel seeking Jehovah and His righteousness commenced even before Christ, with the giving up of Judah, together with all the tribes and kingdoms falling within the horizon of Old Testament prophecy, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar and the imperial rulers who followed him; but so far as the question of the fulfilment of our prophecy is concerned, these events come into consideration merely as preliminary stages of and preparations for the times of decision, which commenced with Christ not only for the Jews, but for all nations.

HAGGAI.

INTRODUCTION.

1. PERSON OF THE PROPHET.—We have no further information concerning *Haggai* (*Chaggai, i.e.* the festal one, formed from *châg*, with the adjective termination *ai*: cf. Ewald, § 164, *c*, and 273, *e*; LXX. Ἀγγαῖος, Vulg. *Aggæus*) than that obtained from the headings to his prophetic addresses (ch. i. 1, ii. 1, 10, 20), and confirmed by Ezra v. 1,—namely, that he commenced his prophesying in the second year of Darius Hystaspes, and by means of his prophecies caused the work of building the temple, which had been suspended in consequence of the machinations of the *Cuthæans* (Samaritans), to be resumed, and in common with the prophet Zechariah, who commenced his labours two months later, ensured the continuance of that work. The extra-biblical accounts of the circumstances of his life have no evidence at all to support them. This is the case, for example, with the statement of Ps. Dorotheus and Ps. Epiphanius, that Haggai came from Babylon to Jerusalem when quite a young man, and that he survived the rebuilding of the temple, and was buried in honour near the burial-place of the priests, to say nothing of the strange opinion which was tolerably general in the times of Jerome and Cyril of Alexandria, and which arose from a misinterpretation of the word מַלְאַךְ in ch. i. 13, viz. that Haggai was an angel who appeared in human shape. And Ewald's conjecture, that Haggai had seen the temple of Solomon, cannot be inferred from ch. ii. 3. In that case he would have been about eighty years old when he commenced his labours as a prophet.

2. THE BOOK OF HAGGAI contains four words of God uttered by the prophet in the second year of the reign of Darius

Hystaspes, which had for their object the furtherance of the building of the temple, and in all probability simply reproduce the leading thought of His oral addresses. In the first prophecy, delivered on the new moon's day of the sixth month of the year named (ch. i.), he condemns the indifference of the people concerning the building of the temple, and represents the failure of the crops and the curse under which the people were suffering as a divine punishment for the neglect of that work. In consequence of this admonition the building was resumed. The three following prophecies in ch. ii. encourage the people to continue the work they have begun. The second, which was delivered only twenty-four days after the first (ch. ii. 1–9), consoles those who are desponding on account of the poverty of the new building, by promising that the Lord will keep the covenant promise made to His people when they came out of Egypt, and by shaking the whole world and all the heathen, will give the new temple even greater glory than that of Solomon had. The last two words of God were delivered to the people on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of the same year. They predict in the first place the cessation of the previous curse, and the return of the blessings of nature promised to the church which had remained faithful to the covenant (vers. 10–19); and in the second place, the preservation of the throne of Israel, represented in the person and attitude of Zerubbabel, among the tempests which will burst upon the kingdoms of this world, and destroy their might and durability (vers. 20–23).

In order to understand clearly the meaning of these prophecies and promises in relation to the development of the Old Testament kingdom of God, we must look at the historical circumstances under which Haggai was called by God to labour as a prophet. Haggai was the first prophet who rose up after the exile in the midst of the congregation of Judah that had returned from Babylon, to proclaim to it the will and saving purposes of its God. Between him and Zephaniah there lay the seventy years' exile, and the labours of the great prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. What all the earlier prophets had foretold, and Jeremiah especially, in a comprehensive and most impressive manner—namely, that the Lord would thrust out Judah also among the heathen, on account of its obstinate

idolatry and resistance to the commandments of God, and would cause it to be enslaved by them—had been fulfilled. As the ten tribes had been carried away by the Assyrians long before, so had the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem been also carried into exile by the Chaldæans through Nebuchadnezzar. The Lord had now banished all His people from before His face, and sent them away among the heathen, but He had not cast them off entirely and for ever. He had indeed suspended His covenant with Israel, but He had not entirely abolished it. Even to the people pining in exile He had not only renewed the ancient promises through the prophet Ezekiel, after the dissolution of the kingdom of Judah and the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, viz. that He would restore the nation to favour again, when it should come to the knowledge of its grievous sins, and turn to Him with penitence, and that He would redeem it from exile, lead it back to its own land, and exalt it to great glory; but He had also caused the might and duration of the kingdoms of the world to be proclaimed through Daniel, and their eventual overthrow through the kingdom of God from heaven. The seventy years, during which the land of Judah was to lie waste and the nation to serve Babel (Jer. xxv. 11), had now passed away. The Babylonian empire had fallen, and Koresh (Cyrus), the founder of the Persian empire, had given the Jews permission to return to their own land in the first year of his sole dominion, and had commanded that the temple of Jehovah in Jerusalem should be rebuilt. In consequence of this, a considerable number of the captives of Judah and Benjamin, viz. 42,360 freemen, with 7337 men-servants and maid-servants, led by Zerubbabel prince of Judah, a descendant of David, who was appointed governor in Judah, and by the high priest Joshua, had returned to their homes (Ezra i. and ii.). Having arrived there, they had restored Jehovah's altar of burnt-offering in the seventh month of the year, and re-established the sacrificial worship prescribed in the law. They had also so far made preparations for the rebuilding of the temple, that even in the second month of the second year after their return they were able solemnly to lay the foundation for the new temple (Ezra iii.).

They had hardly commenced building, however, when the

Samaritans came with a request that they might take part in the building of the temple, because they also sought the God of the Jews. Now, when the chiefs of Judah refused to grant them this request, as being a mixed people, composed of the heathen colonists who had been transplanted into the kingdom of the ten tribes and a few Israelites who were left behind in the land, whilst their worship of God was greatly distorted by heathenism (see at 2 Kings xvii. 24–41), they endeavoured to disturb the work already begun, and to prevent its continuation and completion. They made the hands of the people of Judah idle, as we read in Ezra iv. 4, 5, frightening them while building, and hiring counsellors against them to frustrate their design, the whole of the still remaining time of Cyrus, and even till the reign of king Darius of Persia, so that the work at the house of God at Jerusalem ceased and was suspended till the second year of the reign of this king (Ezra iv. 24). But even if these machinations of the adversaries of Judah furnished the outward occasion for the interruption and suspension of the work they had begun, we must not seek for the sole and sufficient reason for the breaking off of the work in these alone. Nothing is recorded of any revocation of the edict issued by Cyrus during his reign; and even if the letter to Artachsata given in Ezra iv. 7 sqq. referred, as is generally assumed, to the building of the temple, and the reply of this king, which prohibited the continuation of the building, was issued by *Pseudo-Smerdis*, this only took place under the second successor of Cyrus, twelve years after the laying of the foundation-stone of the temple. What the enemies of Judah had previously undertaken and accomplished consisted simply in the fact that they made the hands of the Jewish people idle, frightening them while building, and frustrating their enterprise by hiring counsellors.[1] The latter they would hardly have succeeded in, if the Jews themselves had taken real

[1] So much is evident from the account in the book of Ezra, concerning the machinations of the Samaritans to frustrate the building. The more precise determination of what they did—namely, whether they obtained a command from the king to suspend the building—depends upon the explanation given to the section in Ezra (iv. 6–23), into which we need not enter more minutely till we come to our exposition of the book itself, inasmuch as it is not important to decide this question in order to understand our prophet.

pleasure in the continuation of the work, and had had firm confidence in the assistance of God. These were wanting. Even at the ceremony of laying the foundation-stone, many of the old priests, Levites and heads of tribes, who had seen the first temple, spoiled the people's pleasure by loud weeping. This weeping can hardly be explained merely from the recollection of the trials and sufferings of the last fifty years, which came involuntarily into their mind at that moment of solemn rejoicing, but was no doubt occasioned chiefly by the sight of the miserable circumstances under which the congregation took this work in hand, and in which they could not help saying to themselves, that the execution of the work would not correspond to the hopes which might have been cherished from the restoration of the house of God. But such thoughts as these would of necessity greatly detract from their pleasure in building, and as soon as outward difficulties were also placed in their way, would supply food to the doubt whether the time for carrying on this work had really come. Thus the zeal for building the house of God so cooled down, that they gave it up altogether, and simply began to provide for their own necessities, and to establish themselves comfortably in the land of their fathers, so far as the circumstanees permitted (Hag. i. 4). This becomes perfectly intelligible, if we add that, judging from the natural character of sinful men, there were no doubt a considerable number of men among those who had returned, who had been actuated to return less by living faith in the Lord and His word, than by earthly hopes of prosperity and comfort in the land of their fathers. As soon as they found themselves disappointed in their expectations, they became idle and indifferent with regard to the house of the Lord. And the addresses of our prophet show clearly enough, that one principal reason for the suspension of the work is to be sought for in the lukewarmness and indifference of the people.

The contents and object of these addresses, viz. the circumstance that they are chiefly occupied with the command to build the temple, and attach great promises to the performance of this work, can only be explained in part, however, from the fact that the fidelity of the nation towards its God showed itself in zeal for the house of God. The deeper and truer

explanation is to be found in the significance which the temple possessed in relation to the kingdom of God in its Old Testament form. The covenant of grace, made by the God of heaven and earth with the nation of Israel which He had chosen for His own peculiar possession, required, as a visible pledge of the real fellowship into which Jehovah had entered with Israel, a place where this fellowship could be sustained. For this reason, directly after the conclusion of the covenant at Sinai, God commanded the tabernacle to be erected, for a sanctuary in which, as covenant God, He would dwell among His people in a visible symbol; and, as the sign of the fulfilment of this divine promise, at the dedication of the tabernacle, and also of the temple of Solomon which took its place, the glory of Jehovah in the form of a cloud filled the sanctuary that had been built for His name. Hence the continuance of the ancient covenant, or of the kingdom of God in Israel, was bound up with the temple. When this was destroyed the covenant was broken, and the continuance of the kingdom of God suspended. If, therefore, the covenant which had been dissolved during the exile was to be renewed, if the kingdom of God was to be re-established in its Old Testament form, the rebuilding of the temple was the first and most important prerequisite for this; and the people were bound to pursue the work of building it with all possible zeal, that they might thereby practically attest their desire and readiness to resume the covenant fellowship which had been interrupted for a time. After the people had thus fulfilled the duty that devolved upon them, they might expect from the faithfulness of the Lord, their covenant God, that He would also restore the former gracious connection in all its completeness, and fulfil all His covenant promises. It is in this that the significance of *Haggai's* prophecies consists, so far as they have regard to the furthering of the work of building the temple. And this object was attained. The building of the temple was resumed in consequence of his admonition, and at the end of four years and a half—namely, in the sixth year of the reign of Darius—the work was finished (Ezra vi. 14, 15). But at its dedication the new temple was not filled with the cloud of the glory of Jehovah; yea, the most essential feature in the covenant made at Sinai was wanting, viz. the ark with the testimony, *i.e.* the

tables of the law, which no man could restore, inasmuch as the ten words of the covenant had been written upon the tables by God Himself. The old covenant was not to be restored in its Sinaitic form; but according to the promise made through Jeremiah (xxxi. 31 sqq.), the Lord would make a new covenant with the house of Israel and Judah; He would put His law into their heart, and write it in their minds. The people, however, were not sufficiently prepared for this. Therefore those who had returned from Babylon were still to continue under the rule of the heathen powers of the world, until the time had arrived for the conclusion of the new covenant, when the Lord would come to His temple, and the angel of the covenant would fill it with the glory of the heathen. Thus the period of Zerubbabel's temple was a time of waiting for Judah, and a period of preparation for the coming of the promised Saviour. To give the people a pledge during that period of the certainty of the fulfilment of the covenant grace of God, was the object of Haggai's two promises of salvation.

So far as the form is concerned, the prophecies of Haggai have not the poetical swing of the earlier prophetical diction. They are written in the simplest rhetorical style, and never rise very far above the level of good prose, although vivacity is given to the delivery by the frequent use of interrogatives (cf. ch. i. 4, 9, ii. 3, 12, 13, 19), and it by no means infrequently opens into full oratorical rhythm (cf. ch. i. 6, 9–11, ii. 6–8, 22). One characteristic of Haggai's mode of description is the peculiar habit to which Nægelsbach has called attention—namely, of uttering the main thought with concise and nervous brevity, after a long and verbose introduction (cf. ch. i. 2*b*, i. 12*b*, ii. 5*b*, ii. 19*b*); so that it might be said that he is accustomed "to conceal a small and most intensive kernel under a broad and thick shell." His language is tolerably free from Chaldæisms.

For the exegetical literature, see my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, p. 308; to which add Aug. Koehler's *die Weissagungen Haggai's erklärt*, Erlangen 1860.

EXPOSITION.

ADMONITION TO BUILD THE TEMPLE, AND ITS RESULT.—CHAP. I.

Haggai, having reproved the people for their indifference with regard to the rebuilding of the temple, and pointed to the failure of their crops for want of rain as a divine chastisement consequent upon it, admonishes Zerubbabel the governor, Joshua the high priest, and the people generally, to resume the building of the temple (vers. 2–11), and then describes the way in which his appeal was responded to (vers. 12–15).

In ver. 1 this address is introduced by a statement of the time at which it had been delivered, and the persons to whom it was addressed. The word of Jehovah was uttered through the prophet in the second year of king Darius, on the first day of the sixth month. דָּרְיָוֶשׁ answers to the name *Dâryavush* or *Dârayavush* of the arrow-headed inscriptions; it is derived from the Zendic *dar*, Sanskrit *dhri*, contracted into *dhar*, and is correctly explained by Herodotus (vi. 98) as signifying ἐρξείης = *coërcitor*. It is written in Greek Δαρεῖος (*Darius*). The king referred to is the king of Persia (Ezra iv. 5, 24), the first of that name, *i.e. Darius Hystaspes*, who reigned from 521 to 486 B.C. That this is the king meant, and not *Darius Nothus*, is evident from the fact that Zerubbabel the Jewish prince, and Joshua the high priest, who had led back the exiles from Babylon to Judæa in the reign of Cyrus, in the year 536 (Ezra i. 8, ii. 2), might very well be still at the head of the returned people in the second year of the reign of Darius Hystaspes, *i.e.* in the year 520, but could not have been still living in the reign of Darius Nothus, who did not ascend the throne till 113 years after the close of the captivity. Moreover, in ch. ii. 3, Haggai presupposes that many of his contemporaries had seen the temple of Solomon. Now, as that temple had been destroyed in the year 588 or 587, there might very well be old men still living under Darius Hystaspes, in the year 520, who had seen that temple in their early days; but that could not be the case under Darius Nothus, who

ascended the Persian throne in the year 423. The prophet addresses his word to the temporal and spiritual heads of the nation, to the governor *Zerubbabel* and the high priest *Joshua*. זְרֻבָּבֶל is written in many codd. זְרוּבָּבֶל, and is either formed from זְרוּי בָּבֶל, *in Babyloniam dispersus*, or as the child, if born before the dispersion in Babylonia, would not have received this name proleptically, probably more correctly from זֶרַע בָּבֶל, *in Babylonia satus s. genitus*, in which case the ע was assimilated to the ב when the two words were joined into one, and ב received a *dagesh*. Zerubbabel (LXX. Ζοροβάβελ) was the son of *Shealtiël*. שְׁאַלְתִּיאֵל is written in the same way in ch. ii. 23, 1 Chron. iii. 17, Ezra iii. 2, and Neh. xii. 1; whereas in vers. 12 and 14, and ch. ii. 2, it is contracted into שַׁלְתִּיאֵל. *She'altī'ĕl*, *i.e.* the prayer of God, or one asked of God in prayer, was, according to 1 Chron. iii. 17, if we take *'assīr* as an appellative, a son of *Jeconiah* (Jehoiachin), or, if we take *'assīr* as a proper name, a son of Assir the son of Jeconiah, and therefore a grandson of Jehoiachin. But, according to 1 Chron. iii. 19, Zerubbabel was a son of *Pedaiah*, a brother of Shealtiel. And lastly, according to the genealogy in Luke iii. 27, Shealtiel was not a son of either Assir or Jeconiah, but of *Neri*, a descendant of David through his son Nathan. These three divergent accounts, according to which Zerubbabel was (1) a son of Shealtiël, (2) a son of Pedaiah, the brother of Shealtiël, and a grandson of Assir or Jeconiah, (3) a son of Shealtiël and grandson of Neri, may be brought into harmony by means of the following combinations, if we bear in mind the prophecy of Jeremiah (Jer. xxii. 30), that Jeconiah would be childless, and not be blessed with having one of his seed sitting upon the throne of David and ruling over Judah. Since this prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled, according to the genealogical table given by Luke, inasmuch as Shealtiël's father there is not Assir or Jeconiah, a descendant of David in the line of Solomon, but Neri, a descendant of David's son Nathan, it follows that neither of the sons of Jeconiah mentioned in 1 Chron. iii. 17, 18 (Zedekiah and Assir) had a son, but that the latter had only a daughter, who married a man of the family of her father's tribe, according to the law of the heiresses, Num. xxvii. 8, xxxvi. 8, 9—namely Neri, who belonged to the tribe of Judah and family of David. From

this marriage sprang Shealtiël, Malkiram, Pedaiah, and others. The eldest of these took possession of the property of his maternal grandfather, and was regarded in law as his (legitimate) son. Hence he is described in 1 Chron. iii. 17 as the son of Assir the son of Jeconiah, whereas in Luke he is described, according to his lineal descent, as the son of Neri. But Shealtiël also appears to have died without posterity, and simply to have left a widow, which necessitated a Levirate marriage on the part of one of the brothers (Deut. xxv. 5–10; Matt. xxii. 24–28). Shealtiël's second brother Pedaiah appears to have performed his duty, and to have begotten Zerubbabel and Shimei by this sister-in-law (1 Chron. iii. 19), the former of whom, Zerubbabel, was entered in the family register of the deceased uncle Shealtiël, passing as his (lawful) son and heir, and continuing his family. Koehler holds essentially the same views (see his comm. on ch. ii. 23). Zerubbabel was *pechâh*, a Persian governor. The real meaning of this foreign word is still a disputed point.[1] In addition to his Hebrew name, Zerubbabel also bore the Chaldæan name *Sheshbazzar*, as an officer of the Persian king, as we may see by comparing Ezra i. 8, 11, v. 14, 16, with Ezra ii. 2, iii. 2, 8, and v. 2. For the prince of Judah, Sheshbazzar, to whom Koresh directed the temple vessels brought from Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar to be delivered, and who brought them back from Babylon to Jerusalem (Ezra i. 8, 11, v. 14), and who laid the foundation for the house of God, according to ch. v. 16, is

[1] Prof. Spiegel (in Koehler on Mal. i. 8) objects to the combination attempted by Benfey, and transferred to the more modern lexicons, viz. with the Sanscrit *paksha*, a companion or friend (see at 1 Kings x. 15), on the ground that this word (1) signifies *wing* in the Vedas, and only received the meaning *side*, *party*, *appendix*, at a later period, and (2) does not occur in the Eranian languages, from which it must necessarily have been derived. Hence Spiegel proposes to connect it with *pâvan* (from the root *pâ*, to defend or preserve: compare F. Justi, *Hdb. der Zendsprache*, p. 187), which occurs in Sanscrit and Old Persian (cf. *Khsatrapâvan* = Satrap) at the end of composite words, and in the Avesta as an independent word, in the contracted form *pavan*. "It is quite possible that the dialectic form *pagvan* (cf. the plural *pachâvôth* in Neh. ii. 7, 9) may have developed itself from this, like *dregvat* from *drevat*, and *hvôgva* from *hvôva*." Hence *pechâh* would signify a keeper of the government, or of the kingdom (*Khsatra*).

called Zerubbabel in Ezra ii. 2, as the leader of the procession, who not only laid the foundation for the temple, along with Joshua the high priest, according to Ezra iii. 2, 8, but also resumed the building of the temple, which had been suspended, in connection with the same Joshua during the reign of Darius. The high priest *Joshua* (*Y'hōshuă*, in Ezra iii. 2, 8, iv. 3, contracted into *Yēshūă*) was a son of Jozadak, who had been carried away by the Chaldæans to Babylon (1 Chron. v. 41), and a grandson of the high priest Seraiah, whom Nebuchadnezzar had caused to be executed at Riblah in the year 588, after the conquest of Jerusalem (2 Kings xxv. 18–21; Jer. lii. 24–27). The time given, "in the sixth month," refers to the ordinary reckoning of the Jewish year (compare Zech. i. 7 and vii. 1, and Neh. i. 1 with Neh. ii. 1, where the name of the month is given as well as the number). The first day, therefore, was the new moon's day, which was kept as a feast-day not only by a special festal sacrifice (Num. xxviii. 11 sqq.), but also by the holding of a religious meeting at the sanctuary (compare Isa. i. 13 and the remarks on 2 Kings iv. 23). On this day Haggai might expect some susceptibility on the part of the people for his admonition, inasmuch as on such a day they must have been painfully and doubly conscious that the temple of Jehovah was still lying in ruins (Hengstenberg, Koehler).

Vers. 2–6. The prophet begins by charging the people with their unconcern about building the house of God. Ver. 2. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: This people saith, It is not time to come, the time for the house of Jehovah to be built.*" הָעָם הַזֶּה, *iste populus*, not my people, or Jehovah's people, but *hazzeh* (this) in a contemptuous sense. Of the two clauses, (*a*) "It is not time to come," and (*b*) "The time of the house of Jehovah," the latter gives the more precise definition of the former, the בֹּא (to come) being explained as meaning the time to build the house of Jehovah. The meaning is simply this: the time has not yet arrived to come and build the house of Jehovah; for לֹא in this connection signifies "not yet," as in Gen. ii. 5, Job xxii. 16. A distinction is drawn between coming to the house of Jehovah and building the house, as in ver. 14. There is no ground, therefore, for altering the text, as Hitzig proposes, inasmuch as the defective mode of writing the infinitive בֹּא is

by no means rare (compare, for example, Ex. ii. 18, Lev. xiv. 48, Num. xxxii. 9, 1 Kings xiv. 28, Isa. xx. 1); and there is no foundation whatever for the absurd rendering of the words of the text, "It is not the time of the having arrived of the time of the house," etc. (Hitzig).

The word of Jehovah is opposed in ver. 4 to this speech of the people; and in order to give greater prominence to the antithesis, the introductory formula, "*The word of Jehovah came by Haggai the prophet thus,*" is repeated in ver. 3. In order to appeal to the conscience of the people, God meets them with the question in ver. 4: "*Is it time for you yourselves to live in your houses wainscoted, whilst this house lies waste?*" The הַ before עֵת is not the article, but ה interr. אַתֶּם is added to strengthen the pronoun (cf. Ges. § 121, 3). *Sᵉphūnīm* without the article is connected with the noun, in the form of an apposition: in your houses, they being wainscoted, *i.e.* with the inside walls covered or inlaid with costly wood-work. Such were the houses of the rich and of the more distinguished men (cf. Jer. xxii. 14; 1 Kings vii. 7). Living in such houses was therefore a sign of luxury and comfort. וְהַבַּיִת וגו׳ is a circumstantial clause, which we should express by "*whilst* this house," etc. With this question the prophet cuts off all excuse, on the ground that the circumstances of the times, and the oppression under which they suffered, did not permit of the rebuilding of the temple. If they themselves lived comfortably in wainscoted houses, their civil and political condition could not be so oppressive, that they could find in that a sufficient excuse for neglecting to build the temple. Even if the building of the temple had been prohibited by an edict of *Pseudo-Smerdes*, as many commentators infer from Ezra iv. 8-24, the reign of this usurper only lasted a few months; and with his overthrow, and the ascent of the throne by Darius Hystaspes, a change had taken place in the principles of government, which might have induced the heads of Judah, if the building of the house of God had rested upon their hearts as it did upon the heart of king David (2 Sam. vii. 2; Ps. cxxxii. 2-5), to take steps under the new king to secure the revocation of this edict, and the renewal of the command issued by Cyrus.

After rebutting the untenable grounds of excuse, Haggai calls attention in vers. 5, 6 to the curse with which God has

punished, and is still punishing, the neglect of His house. Ver. 5. "*And now, thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Set your heart upon your ways.* Ver. 6. *Ye have sowed much, and brought in little: ye eat, and not for satisfaction; drink, and not to be filled with drink: ye clothe yourselves, and it does not serve for warming; and the labourer for wages works for wages into a purse pierced with holes.*" שִׂימוּ לְבַבְכֶם, a favourite formula with Haggai (cf. ver. 7 and ch. ii. 15, 18). To set the heart upon one's ways, *i.e.* to consider one's conduct, and lay it to heart. The ways are the conduct, with its results. J. H. Michaelis has given it correctly, "To your designs and actions, and their consequences." In their ways, hitherto, they have reaped no blessing: they have sowed much, but brought only a little into their barns. הָבֵא, inf. abs., to bring in what has been reaped, or bring it home. What is here stated must not be restricted to the last two harvests which they had had under the reign of Darius, as Koehler supposes, but applies, according to ch. ii. 15–17, to the harvests of many years, which had turned out very badly. The inf. abs., which is used in the place of the finite verb and determined by it, is continued in the clauses which follow, אָכוֹל, etc. The meaning of these clauses is, not that the small harvest was not sufficient to feed and clothe the people thoroughly, so that they had to "cut their coat according to their cloth," as Maurer and Hitzig suppose, but that even in their use of the little that had been reaped, the blessing of God was wanting, as is not only evident from the words themselves, but placed beyond the possibility of doubt by ver. 9.[1] What they ate and drank did not suffice to satisfy them; the clothes which they procured yielded no warmth; and the wages which the day-labourer earned vanished just as rapidly as if it had been placed in a bag full of holes (cf. Lev. xxvi. 26; Hos. iv. 10; Mic. vi. 14). לוֹ after לְהֹם refers to the individual who

[1] Calvin and Osiander see a double curse in ver. 6. The former says, "We know that God punishes men in both ways, both by withdrawing His blessing, so that the earth is parched, and the heaven gives no rain, and also, even when there is a good supply of the fruits of the earth, by preventing their satisfying, so that there is no real enjoyment of them. It often happens that men collect what would be quite a sufficient quantity for food, but for all that, are still always hungry. This kind of curse is seen the more plainly when God deprives the bread and wine of their true virtue, so that eating and drinking fail to support the strength."

clothes himself, and is to be explained from the phrase חַם לִי, "I am warm" (1 Kings i. 1, 2, etc.).

Vers. 7-11. After this allusion to the visitation of God, the prophet repeats the summons in vers. 7, 8, to lay to heart their previous conduct, and choose the way that is well-pleasing to God. Ver. 7. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Direct your heart upon your ways.* Ver. 8. *Go up to the mountains and fetch wood and build the house, and I will take pleasure therein and glorify myself, saith Jehovah.*" *Hâhâr* (the mountain) is not any particular mountain, say the temple mountain (Grotius, Maurer, Ros.), or Lebanon (Cocceius, Ewald, etc.); but the article is used generically, and *hâhâr* is simply the mountain regarded as the locality in which wood chiefly grows (cf. Neh. viii. 15). Fetching wood for building is an individualizing expression for providing building materials; so that there is no ground for the inference drawn by Hitzig and many of the Rabbins, that the walls of the temple had been left standing when it was destroyed, so that all that had to be done was to renew the wood-work,—an inference at variance not only with the reference made to the laying of the foundation of the temple in ch. ii. 18 and Ezra iii. 10, but also to the express statement in the account sent by the provincial governor to king Darius in Ezra v. 8, viz. that the house of the great God was built with square stones, and that timber was laid in the walls. וְאֶרְצֶה־בּוֹ, so will I take pleasure in it (the house); whereas so long as it lay in ruins, God was displeased with it. וְאֶכָּבֵד, and I will glorify myself, *sc.* upon the people, by causing my blessing to flow to it again. The *keri* וְאֶכָּבְדָה is an unnecessary emendation, inasmuch as, although the voluntative might be used (cf. Ewald, § 350, *a*), it is not required, and has not been employed, both because it is wanting in אֶרְצֶה, for the simple reason that the verbs ל״ה do not easily admit of this form (Ewald, § 228, *a*), and also because it is not used in other instances, where the same circumstances do not prevail (*e.g.* Zech. i. 3).[1] Ewald

[1] The later Talmudists, indeed, have taken the omission of the ה, which stands for 5 when used as a numeral, as an indication that there were five things wanting in the second temple: (1) the ark of the covenant, with the atoning lid and the cherubim; (2) the sacred fire; (3) the shechinah; (4) the Holy Spirit; (5) the Urim and Thummim (compare the Babylonian tract *Joma* 21*b*, and *Sal. ben Melech, Miclal Jophi* on Hag. i. 8).

and Hitzig adopt this rendering, "that I may feel myself honoured," whilst Maurer and Rückert translate it as a passive, "that I may be honoured." But both of these views are much less in harmony with the context, since what is there spoken of is the fact that God will then turn His good pleasure to the people once more, and along with that His blessing. How thoroughly this thought predominates, is evident from the more elaborate description, which follows in vers. 9–11, of the visitation from God, viz. the failure of crops and drought.

Ver. 9. "*Ye looked out for much, and behold (it came) to little; and ye brought it home, and I blew into it. Why? is the saying of Jehovah of hosts. Because of my house, that it lies waste, whereas ye run every man for his house.* Ver. 10. *Therefore the heaven has withheld its dew on your account, that no dew fell, and the earth has withheld her produce.* Ver. 11. *And I called drought upon the earth, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon everything that the ground produces, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.*" The meaning of ver. 9*a* is evident from the context. The inf. abs. *pânōh* stands in an address full of emotion in the place of the perfect, and, as the following clause shows, for the second person plural. Ye have turned yourselves, fixed your eye upon much, *i.e.* upon a rich harvest, וְהִנֵּה־לִמְעָט, and behold the desired much turned to little. Ye brought into the house, ye fetched home what was reaped, and I blew into it, *i.e.* I caused it to fly away, like chaff before the wind, so that there was soon none of it left. Here is a double curse, therefore, as in ver. 6: instead of much, but little was reaped, and the little that was brought home melted away without doing any good. To this exposition of the curse the prophet appends the question יַעַן מָה, why, *sc.* has this taken place? that he may impress the cause with the greater emphasis upon their hardened minds. For the same reason he inserts once more, between the question and the answer, the words "is the saying of Jehovah of hosts," that the answer may not be mistaken for a subjective view, but laid to heart as a declaration of the God who rules the world. The choice of the form מָה for מָה was probably occasioned by the guttural ע in the יַעַן, which is closely connected with it, just as the analogous use of עַל־מָה instead of עַל־מָה in Isa. i. 5,

Ps. x. 13, and Jer. xvi. 10, where it is not followed by a word commencing with ע as in Deut. xxix. 23, 1 Kings ix. 8, Jer. xxii. 8. The former have not been taken into account at all by Ewald in his elaborate *Lehrbuch* (cf. § 182, *b*). In the answer given by God, "because of my house" (*ya'an bēthī*) is placed first for the sake of emphasis, and the more precise explanation follows. אֲשֶׁר הוּא, "because it," not "that which." וְאַתֶּם וגו׳ is a circumstantial clause. לְבֵיתוֹ . . . רָצִים, not "every one runs to his house," but "runs for his house," לְ denoting the object of the running, as in Isa. lix. 7 and Prov. i. 16. "When the house of Jehovah was in question, they did not move from the spot; but if it concerned their own house, they ran" (Koehler). In vers. 10 and 11, the curse with which God punished the neglect of His house is still further depicted, with an evident play upon the punishment with which transgressors are threatened in the law (Lev. xxvi. 19, 20; Deut. xi. 17 and xxviii. 23, 24). עֲלֵיכֶם is not a *dat. incomm.* (Hitzig), which is never expressed by עַל; but עַל is used either in a causal sense, "on your account" (Chald.), or in a local sense, "over you," after the analogy of Deut. xxviii. 23, שָׁמֶיךָ אֲשֶׁר עַל רֹאשְׁךָ, in the sense of "the heaven over you will withhold" (Ros., Koehl.). It is impossible to decide with certainty between these two. The objection to the first, that "on your account" would be superfluous after עַל־כֵּן, has no more force than that raised by Hitzig against the second, viz. that *super* would be מֵעַל. There is no tautology in the first explanation, but the עֲלֵיכֶם, written emphatically at the commencement, gives greater intensity to the threat: "on account of you," you who only care for your own houses, the heaven withholds the dew. And with the other explanation, מֵעַל would only be required in case עֲלֵיכֶם were regarded as the object, upon which the dew ought to fall down from above. כָּלְאָה, not "to shut itself up," but in a transitive sense, with the derivative meaning to withhold or keep back; and *mittâl*, not partitively "of the dew," equivalent to "a portion of it," but *min* in a privative sense, "away from," *i.e.* so that no dew falls; for it is inadmissible to take *mittâl* as the object, "to hold back along with the dew," after the analogy of Num. xxiv. 11 (Hitzig), inasmuch as the accusative of the person is wanting, and in the parallel clause כָּלְאָה is construed with the *accus. rei.* וָאֶקְרָא in ver. 11 is still dependent upon עַל־כֵּן. The word *chōrebh*, in the

sense of drought, applies strictly speaking only to the land and the fruits of the ground, but it is also transferred to men and beasts, inasmuch as drought, when it comes upon all vegetation, affects men and beasts as well; and in this clause it may be taken in the general sense of devastation. The word is carefully chosen, to express the idea of the *lex talionis*. Because the Jews left the house of God *châr*ēbh, they were punished with *chōrebh*. The last words are comprehensive: "all the labour of the hands" had reference to the cultivation of the soil and the preparation of the necessities of life.

Vers. 12–15. The result of this reproof.—Ver. 12. "*Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and the whole of the remnant of the people, hearkened to the voice of Jehovah their God, and according to the words of Haggai the prophet, as Jehovah their God had sent him; and the people feared before Jehovah.*" "All the remnant of the people" does not mean the rest of the nation besides Zerubbabel and Joshua, in support of which Koehler refers to Jer. xxxix. 3 and 1 Chron. xii. 38, either here or in ver. 14 and ch. ii. 2, inasmuch as Zerubbabel as the governor and prince of Judah, and Joshua as the high priest, are not embraced under the idea of the "people" (*ʿâm*), as is the case in the passages quoted, where those who are described as the *shᵉʾērīth*, or remnant, are members or portions of the whole in question. The "remnant of the people," as in Zech. viii. 6, is that portion of the nation which had returned from exile as a small gleaning of the nation, which had once been much larger. שָׁמַע בְּקוֹל, to hearken to the voice, *i.e.* to lay to heart, so as to obey what was heard. בְּקוֹל יי׳ is still more minutely defined by וְעַל־דִּבְרֵי וגו׳: "and (indeed) according to the words of Haggai, in accordance with the fact that Jehovah had sent him." This last clause refers to דִּבְרֵי, which he had to speak according to the command of God (Hitzig); cf. Mic. iii. 4. The first fruit of the hearing was, that the people feared before Jehovah; the second is mentioned in ver. 14, namely, that they resumed the neglected building of the temple. Their fearing before Jehovah presupposes that they saw their sin against God, and discerned in the drought a judgment from God.

This penitential state of mind on the part of the people and their rulers was met by the Lord with the promise of His assistance, in order to elevate this disposition into determina-

tion and deed. Ver. 13. "*Then spake Haggai, the messenger of Jehovah, in the message of Jehovah to the people, thus: I am with you, is the saying of Jehovah.* Ver. 14. *And Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, and the spirit of Joshua, and the spirit of all the remnant of the nation; and they came and did work at the house of Jehovah of hosts, their God.*" The prophet is called מַלְאַךְ in ver. 13, *i.e.* messenger (not "angel," as many in the time of the fathers misunderstood the word as meaning), as being sent by Jehovah to the people, to make known to them His will (compare Mal. ii. 7, where the same epithet is applied to the priest). As the messenger of Jehovah, he speaks by command of Jehovah, and not in his own name or by his own impulse. אֲנִי אִתְּכֶם, I am with you, will help you, and will remove all the obstacles that stand in the way of your building (cf. ch. ii. 4). This promise Jehovah fulfilled, first of all by giving to Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the people, a willingness to carry out the work. הֵעִיר רוּחַ, to awaken the spirit of any man, *i.e.* to make him willing and glad to carry out His resolutions (compare 1 Chron. v. 26; 2 Chron. xxi. 16; Ezra i. 1, 5). Thus filled with joyfulness, courage, and strength, they began the work on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of king Darius (ver. 15), that is to say, twenty-three days after Haggai had first addressed his challenge to them. The interval had been spent in deliberation and counsel, and in preparations for carrying out the work. In several editions and some few MSS. in Kennicott, in Tischendorf's edition of the LXX., in the Itala and in the Vulgate, ver. 15 is joined to the next chapter. But this is proved to be incorrect by the fact that the chronological statements in ver. 15 and ch. ii. 1 are irreconcilable with one another. Ver. 15 is really so closely connected with ver. 14, that it is rather to be regarded as the last clause of that verse.

THE GLORY OF THE NEW TEMPLE, AND THE BLESSINGS OF THE NEW ERA.—CHAP. II.

This chapter contains three words of God, which Haggai published to the people in the seventh and ninth months of the second year of Darius, to strengthen them in their zeal for the building of the temple, and to preserve them from discouragement. The first of these words (vers. 1–9) refers to the relation in which the new temple would stand to the former one, and was uttered not quite four weeks after the building of the temple had been resumed.

Vers. 1–9. GLORY OF THE NEW TEMPLE.—Vers. 1 and 2. "*In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the Lord came through Haggai*," viz. to Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the remnant of the nation, that is to say, to the whole of the congregation that had returned from exile; whereas the first appeal was only addressed to Zerubbabel and Joshua (see the introduction to ch. i. 1), although it also applied to the whole nation. Just as in the second year of the return from Babylon, when the foundation for the temple, which was about to be rebuilt, was laid in the reign of Cyrus, many old men, who had seen the temple of Solomon, burst out into loud weeping when they saw the new foundation (Ezra iii. 10 sqq.); a similar feeling of mourning and despair appears to have taken possession of the people and their rulers immediately after the work had been resumed under Darius, and doubts arose whether the new building was really well-pleasing to the Lord, and ought to be carried on. The occasion for this despondency is not to be sought, as Hitzig supposes, in the fact that objections were made to the continuance of the building (Ezra v. 3), and that the opinion prevailed in consequence that the works ought to be stopped till the arrival of the king's authority. For this view not only has no support whatever in our prophecy, but is also at variance with the account in the book of Ezra, according to which the governor and his companions, who had made inquiries concerning the command to build, did not stop the building while they sent word of the affair to the king (Ezra v. 5). Moreover, the conjecture that the people had been seized with a feeling of

sadness, when the work had so far advanced that they were able to institute a comparison between the new temple and the earlier one (Hengstenberg), does not suffice to explain the rapid alteration which took place in the feelings of the people. The building could not have been so far advanced in three weeks and a half as that the contrast between the new temple and the former one could be clearly seen, if it had not been noticed from the very first; a fact, however, to which Ezra iii. 12 distinctly refers. But although it had been seen from the very beginning that the new building would not come up to the glory of the former temple, the people could not from the very outset give up the hope of erecting a building which, if not quite equal to the former one in glory, would at all events come somewhat near to it. Under these circumstances, their confidence in the work might begin to vanish as soon as the first enthusiasm flagged, and a time arrived which was more favourable for the quiet contemplation of the general condition of affairs. This explanation is suggested by the time at which the second word of God was delivered to the congregation through the prophet. The twenty-first day of the seventh month was the seventh day of the feast of tabernacles (cf. Lev. xxiii. 34 sqq.), the great festival of rejoicing, on which Israel was to give practical expression to its gratitude for the gracious guidance which it had received through the wilderness, as well as for the blessing of the ingathering of all the fruits of the ground, which ended with the gathering of the orchard-fruits and with the vintage, by the presentation of numerous burnt-offerings and other sacrifices (see my *biblische Archäologie*, i. p. 415 sqq.). The return of this festal celebration, especially after a harvest which had turned out very miserably, and showed no signs of the blessing of God, could not fail to call up vividly before the mind the difference between the former times, when Israel was able to assemble in the courts of the Lord's house, and so to rejoice in the blessings of His grace in the midst of abundant sacrificial meals, and the present time, when the altar of burnt-sacrifice might indeed be restored again, and the building of the temple be resumed, but in which there was no prospect of erecting a building that would in any degree answer to the glory of the former temple; and when the prophecies of an Isaiah or an Ezekiel were remembered,

according to which the new temple was to surpass the former one in glory, it would be almost sure to produce gloomy thoughts, and supply food for doubt whether the time had really come for rebuilding the temple, when after all it would be only a miserable hut. In this gloomy state of mind consolation was very necessary, if the hardly awakened zeal for the building of the house of God was not to cool down and vanish entirely away. To bring this consolation to those who were in despair was the object of the second word of God, which Haggai was to publish to the congregation. It runs as follows:

Ver. 3. "*Who is left among you, that saw this house in its former glory? and how do ye see it now? Is it not as nothing in your eyes?* Ver. 4. *And now be comforted, Zerubbabel, is the saying of Jehovah; and be comforted, Joshua son of Jozadak, thou high priest; and be comforted all the people of the land, is the saying of Jehovah, and work: for I am with you, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 5. *The word that I concluded with you at your coming out of Egypt, and my Spirit, stand in the midst of you; fear ye not.*" The prophet, admitting the poverty of the new building in comparison with the former one, exhorts them to continue the work in comfort, and promises them that the Lord will be with them, and fulfil His covenant promises. The question in ver. 3 is addressed to the old men, who had seen Solomon's temple in all its glory. There might be many such men still living, as it was only sixty-seven or sixty-eight years since the destruction of the first temple. הַנִּשְׁאָר is the predicate to the subject מִי, and has the article because it is defined by the reflex action of the relative clause which follows (compare Ewald, § 277, *a*). The second question, וּמָה אַתֶּם וגו', *et qualem videtis*, In what condition do ye see it now? is appended to the last clause of the first question: the house which ye saw in its former glory. There then follows with הֲלוֹא, in the form of a lively assurance, the statement of the difference between the two buildings. כְּמֹהוּ כְאַיִן, which has been interpreted in very different ways, may be explained from the double use of the כ in comparisons, which is common in Hebrew, and which answers to our *as—so:* here, however, it is used in the same way as in Gen. xviii. 25 and xliv. 18; that is to say, the object to be compared is mentioned first, and the object with which the comparison is instituted is mentioned

afterwards, in this sense, "so is it, as having no existence," in which case we should either leave out the first particle of comparison, or if it were expressed, should have to reverse the order of the words: "as not existing (nothing), so is it in your eyes." Koehler gives this correct explanation; whereas if כָּמֹהוּ be explained according to Joel ii. 2, its equal, or such an one, we get the unsuitable thought, that it is not the temple itself, but something like the temple, that is compared to nothing. Even in Gen. xliv. 18, to which Ewald very properly refers as containing a perfectly equivalent phrase, it is not a man equal to Joseph, but Joseph himself, who is compared to Pharaoh, and described as being equal to him. Nevertheless they are not to let their courage fail, but to be comforted and to work. *Châzaq*, to be inwardly strong, *i.e.* to be comforted. *'Asâh*, to work or procure, as in Ruth ii. 19 and Prov. xxxi. 13, in actual fact, to continue the work of building bravely, without there being any necessity to supply מְלָאכָה from ch. i. 14. For Jehovah will be with them (cf. ch. i. 13). In confirmation of this promise the Lord adds, that the word which He concluded with them on their coming out of Egypt, and His Spirit, will continue among them. "The word" (*'eth-haddâbhâr*) cannot be either the accusative of the object to the preceding verb *'ăsū* (ver. 4), or to any verb we may choose to supply, or the preposition *'ēth*, with, or the accusative of norm or measure (Luther, Calvin, and others). To connect it with *'ăsū* yields no suitable meaning. It is not the word, which they vowed to the Lord, at the conclusion of the covenant, that they are to do now, but the work which they had begun, viz. the building of the temple, they are now to continue. It is perfectly arbitrary to supply the verb *zikhrū*, remember (Ewald and Hengstenberg), and to understand the prophet as reminding them of the word "fear not" (Ex. xx. 17 (20)). That word, "fear not," with which Moses, not God, infused courage into the people, who were alarmed at the terrible phenomenon with which Jehovah came down upon Sinai, has no such central significance as that Haggai could point to it without further introduction, and say that Jehovah had concluded it with them on their coming out of Egypt. The word which the Lord concluded with Israel when He led it out of Egypt, can only be the promise which established the covenant, to the fulfilment of which God bound

Himself in relation to the people, when He led them out of Egypt, namely, the word that He would make Israel into His own property out of all nations (Ex. xix. 5, 6; Deut. vii. 6; cf. Jer. vii. 22, 23, and xi. 4). It would quite agree with this to take *'ēth* as the accusative of the norm, and also to connect it as a preposition, if this could only be shown to be in accordance with the rules of the language. But although the accusative in Hebrew is often used, in the relation of free subordination, "to express more precisely the relation of measure and size, space and time, mode and kind" (cf. Ewald, § 204–206), it is impossible to find any example of such an accusative of norm as is here assumed, especially with *'ēth* preceding it. But if *'ēth* were a preposition instead of אִתְּכֶם, we should have עִמָּכֶם, inasmuch as the use of אֶת־הַדָּבָר, as a parallel to אִתְּכֶם, makes the words clumsy and awkward. The thought which Haggai evidently wishes to express requires that *haddâbhâr* should stand upon the same line with *rūchī*, so that *'eth-haddâbhâr* is actually the subject to *'ōmedeth*, and *'ēth* is simply used to connect the new declaration with the preceding one, and to place it in subjection to the one which follows, in the sense of "as regards," *quoad* (Ewald, § 277, *d*, pp. 683–4), in which case the choice of the accusative in the present instance may either be explained from a kind of attraction (as in the Latin, *urbem quam statuo vestra est*), as Hitzig supposes, or from the blending together of two constructions, as Koehler maintains; that is to say, Haggai intended to write אֶת־הַדָּבָר וְרוּחִי הָעֹמֶדֶת; but was induced to alter the proposed construction by the relative clause אֲשֶׁר כָּרַתִּי וגו׳ attaching itself to הַדָּבָר. Consequently *'ōmedeth*, as predicate, not only belongs to *rūchī*, but also to *haddâbhâr*, in the sense of to have continuance and validity; and according to a later usage of the language, עָמַד is used for קוּם, to stand fast (compare Isa. xl. 8 with Dan. xi. 14). The word, that Israel is the property of Jehovah, and Jehovah the God of Israel, still stands in undiminished force; and not only so, but His Spirit also still works in the midst of Israel. *Rūăch*, in parallelism with the word containing the foundation of the covenant, is neither the spirit of prophecy (Chald., J. D. Mich.), nor the spirit which once filled Bezaleel and his companions (Ex. xxxi. 1 sqq., xxxvi. 1 sqq.), enabling them to erect the tabernacle in a proper manner, and one well-pleasing to God

(Luc., Osiander, and Koehler). Both views are too narrow; *rūăch* is the divine power which accompanies the word of promise and realizes it in a creative manner, *i.e.* not merely "the virtue with which God will establish their souls, that they may not be overcome by temptations" (Calvin), but also the power of the Spirit working in the world, which is able to remove all the external obstacles that present themselves to the realization of the divine plan of salvation. This Spirit is still working in Israel ("in the midst of you"); therefore they are not to fear, even if the existing state of things does not correspond to human expectations. The omnipotence of God can and will carry out His word, and glorify His temple. This leads to the further promise in vers. 6–9, which gives the reason for the exhortation, "Fear ye not."

Ver. 6. "*For thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Once more, in a short time it comes to pass, I shake heaven and earth, and the sea, and the dry.* Ver. 7. *And I shake all nations, and the costly of all nations will come, and I shall fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 8. *Mine is the silver, and mine the gold, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 9. *The last glory of this house will be greater than the first, saith Jehovah of hosts; and in this place shall I give peace, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts.*" Different explanations have been given of the definition of the time עוֹד אַחַת מְעַט הִיא. Luther, Calvin, and others, down to Ewald and Hengstenberg, follow the Chaldee and Vulgate, and either take *achath* in the sense of the indefinite article or as a numeral, "*adhuc unum modicum est*," or "it is yet a little thither." But if *achath* belonged to מְעַט as a numeral adjective, either in the one sense or the other, according to the arrangement adopted without exception in Hebrew (for *'echâd* is not an adjective in Dan. viii. 13), it could not stand before מְעַט, but must be placed after it. The difference of gender also precludes this combination, inasmuch as מְעַט is not construed as a feminine in a single passage. We must therefore take מְעַט הִיא as forming an independent clause of itself, *i.e.* as a more precise definition of עוֹד אַחַת. But *'achath* does not mean one = one time, or a short space of time (Burk, Hitzig, Hofmann); nor does it acquire this meaning from the clause מְעַט הִיא; nor can it be sustained by arbitrarily supplying עֵת. *'Achath* is used as a neuter in the sense of "once," as in Ex. xxx. 10, 2 Kings

vi. 10, Job xl. 5 (cf. Ewald, § 269, *b*). מְעַט הִיא, a little, *i.e.* a short time is it, equivalent to "soon," in a short time will it occur (cf. Hos. viii. 10; Ps. xxxvii. 10). The LXX. have rendered it correctly ἔτι ἅπαξ, only they have left out מְעַט הִיא. The words, "once more and indeed in a short time I shake," etc., have not the meaning which Koehl. attaches to the correct rendering, viz. "Once, and only once, will Jehovah henceforth shake heaven and earth," in which the עוֹד standing at the head is both moved from its place, and taken, not in the sense of repetition or of continuance from the present to the future, but simply in the sense of an allusion to the future; in other words, it is completely deprived of its true meaning. For עוֹד never loses its primary sense of repetition or return any more than the German *noch* (still or yet), so as to denote an occurrence in the future without any allusion whatever to an event that has already happened or is in existence still, not even in 2 Sam. xix. 36 and 2 Chron. xvii. 6, with which Koehler endeavours to support his views, without observing that in these passages עוֹד is used in a very different sense, signifying in 2 Sam. *præterea*, and in 2 Chron. "moreover." In the verse before us it is used with reference to the previous shaking of the world at the descent of Jehovah upon Sinai to establish the covenant with Israel, to which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has quite correctly taken it as referring (Heb. xii. 26). On the other hand, the objection offered by Koehler, that that shaking did not extend beyond Sinai and the Sinaitic region, either according to the historical account in Ex. xix. 16–18, or the poetical descriptions in Judg. v. 4, 5, and Ps. lxviii. 8, 9, is incorrect. For not only in the two poetical descriptions referred to, but also in Hab. iii. 6, the manifestation of God upon Sinai is represented as a trembling or shaking of the earth, whereby the powers of the heaven were set in motion, and the heavens dropped down water. The approaching shaking of the world will be much more violent; it will affect the heaven and the earth in all their parts, the sea and the solid ground, and also the nations. Then will the condition of the whole of the visible creation and of the whole of the world of nations be altered. The shaking of the heaven and the earth, *i.e.* of the universe, is closely connected with the shaking of all nations. It is not merely a figurative representation or symbol,

however, of great political agitations, but is quite as real as the shaking of the nations, and not merely follows this and is caused by it, but also precedes it and goes side by side with it, and only in its completion does it form the conclusion to the whole of the shaking of the world. For earthquakes and movements of the powers of heaven are heralds and attendants of the coming of the Lord to judgment upon the whole earth, through which not only the outward form of the existing world is altered, but the present world itself will finally be reduced to ruins (Isa. xxiv. 18–20), and out of the world thus perishing there are to be created a new heaven and a new earth (Isa. lxv. 17, lxvi. 22; 2 Pet. iii. 10–13). But if the shaking of heaven and earth effects a violent breaking up of the existing condition of the universe, the shaking of all nations can only be one by which an end is put to the existing condition of the world of nations, by means of great political convulsions, and indeed, according to the explanation given in ver. 22, by the Lord's overthrowing the throne of the kingdoms, annihilating their power, and destroying their materials of war, so that one falls by the sword of the other, that is to say, by wars and revolutions, by which the might of the heathen world is broken and annihilated. It follows from this, that the shaking of the heathen is not to be interpreted spiritually, either as denoting "the marvellous, supernatural, and violent impulse by which God impels His elect to betake themselves to the fold of Christ" (Calvin), or "the movement to be produced among the nations through the preaching of the gospel, with the co-operation of the Holy Spirit." The impulse given by the preaching of the gospel and the operation of the Holy Spirit to such souls among the nations as desire salvation, to seek salvation from the living God, is only the fruit of the shaking of the heathen world, and is not to be identified with it; for the coming of the *chemdath kol-haggōyīm* is defined by וּבָאוּ with the *Vav consec.* as a consequence of the shaking of the nations.

By *chemdath kol-haggōyīm* most of the earlier orthodox commentators understood the Messiah, after the example of the Vulgate, *et veniet desideratus gentibus*, and Luther's "consolation of the Gentiles." But the plural בָּאוּ is hardly reconcilable with this. If, for example, *chemdath* were the subject of the clause, as most of the commentators assume, we should have

the singular וּבָא. For the rule, that in the case of two nouns connected together in the construct state, the verb may take the number of the governed noun, applies only to cases in which the governed noun contains the principal idea, so that there is a *constructio ad sensum;* whereas in the case before us the leading idea would be formed, not by *kol-haggōyīm*, but by *chemdath, desideratus*, or consolation, as a designation of the Messiah. Hence Cocc., Mark, and others, have taken *chemdath* as the accusative of direction: "that they (*sc.* the nations) may come to the desire of all nations—namely, to Christ." It cannot be objected to this, as Koehler supposes, that to designate Christ as the desire of all nations would be either erroneous, inasmuch as in the time of Haggai only a very few heathen knew anything about Israel's hope of a Messiah, or perfectly unintelligible to his contemporaries, especially if the meaning of the epithet were that the heathen would love Him at some future time. For the latter remark is at once proved to be untenable by the prophecy of Isaiah and Micah, to the effect that all nations will flow to the mountain of God's house. After such prophecies, the thought that the heathen would one day love the Messiah could not be unintelligible to the contemporaries of our prophet; and there is not the smallest proof of the first assertion. In the year 520 B.C., when the ten tribes had already been scattered among the heathen for 200 years, and the Judæans for more than seventy years, the Messianic hope of Israel could not be any longer altogether unknown to the nations. It may with much better reason be objected to the former view, that if *chemdâh* were the accusative of direction, we should expect the preposition *'el* in order to avoid ambiguity. But what is decisive against it is the fact, that the coming of the nations to the Messiah would be a thought completely foreign to the context, since the Messiah cannot without further explanation be identified with the temple. *Chemdâh* signifies desire (2 Chron. xxi. 20), then the object of desire, that in which a man finds pleasure and joy, valuables. *Chemdath haggōyīm* is therefore the valuable possessions of the heathen, or according to ver. 8 their gold and silver, or their treasures and riches; not the best among the heathen (Theod. Mops., Capp., Hitzig). Hence *chemdath* cannot be the accusative of direction, since the thought that the heathen come to the treasures of all the

heathen furnishes no suitable meaning; but it is the nominative or subject, and is construed as a collective word with the verb in the plural. The thought is the following: That shaking will be followed by this result, or produce this effect, that all the valuable possessions of the heathen will come to fill the temple with glory. Compare Isa. lx. 5, where the words, "the possessions (riches) of the heathen (*chēl gōyīm*) will come to thee," *i.e.* be brought to Jerusalem, express the same thought; also Isa. lx. 11. With the valuable possessions of the heathen the Lord will glorify His temple, or fill it with *kâbhōd*. *Kâbhōd* without the article denotes the glory which the temple will receive through the possessions of the heathen presented there. The majority of the commentators have referred these words to the glorification of the temple through the appearance of Jesus in it, and appeal to Ex. xl. 34, 35, 1 Kings viii. 10, 11, 2 Chron. v. 13, 14, according to which passages the glory of Jehovah filled the tabernacle and Solomon's temple at their dedication, so that they identify *kâbhōd* (glory) with *k'bhōd Y'hōvâh* (glory of Jehovah) without reserve. But this is impracticable, although the expression *kâbhōd* is chosen by the prophet with a reference to those events, and the fulfilment of our prophecy did commence with the fact that Jehovah came to His temple in the person of Jesus Christ (Mal. iii. 1).— Ver. 8. Jehovah can fill this house with glory, because the silver and gold which the heathen nations possess belong to Him. By shaking all kingdoms He can induce the nations to present their treasures to Him as gifts for the glorification of His house. Thus (the promise closes with this in ver. 9), the later glory of this house will be greater than the former was. *Hâachărōn* might be regarded as belonging to *habbayith hazzeh*, in the sense of "the glory of this latter house;" and the majority of the commentators have taken it so, after the Itala, Vulgate, and Peschito. But it is quite as admissible to connect it with *kâbhōd*, in the sense of "the later glory of this house," inasmuch as when one substantive is determined by another which is connected with it in the construct state, the adjective belonging to the *nomen regens* follows with the article (cf. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1; 1 Chron. xxiii. 27; and Ewald, § 289, *a*). This is the rendering adopted by Michaelis, Maurer, Hitzig, and others, after the LXX. According to the first

construction, the distinction would be drawn between a former and a later house; according to the second, simply between the earlier and later glory of the same house; and the passage would be based upon the idea, that through all ages there was only one house of Jehovah in Jerusalem existing under different forms. Ver. 3 is decisive in favour of the second view, for there an earlier glory is attributed to this house, and contrasted with its present miserable condition. The first or former glory is that of Solomon's temple, the later or last that of Zerubbabel's. The difference of opinion as to the true rendering of the words has no material influence upon the matter itself; except that, if the latter view be adopted, the question so often discussed by earlier writers—namely, whether by the second temple we are to understand the temple of Zerubbabel or the temple as altered by Herod, which many have erroneously taken to be the third—falls to the ground as perfectly unmeaning. The final glory of the temple will also be a lasting one. This is implied in the closing words of the promise: "And in this place will I give peace." "This place" is not the temple, but Jerusalem, as the place where the temple is built; and the "peace" is not spiritual peace, but external peace, which does indeed in its perfect form include spiritual peace as well. This is perfectly evident from the parallel passages, Mic. v. 4, Joel iv. 17, and Isa. lx. 18.

If we also take up the question as to the fulfilment of this prophecy, we must keep the two features quite distinct—(*a*) the shaking of heaven and earth and all nations; (*b*) the consequence of this shaking, the coming of the heathen with their possessions to the glorification of the temple—although they both stand in close connection. The earlier commentators were no doubt generally right, when they sought for the fulfilment in the establishment of the new covenant through Christ; they simply erred in referring the predicted shaking of the nations and the promised glorification of the temple in too one-sided and exclusive a manner to the coming of Christ in the flesh, to His teaching in the temple, and to the establishment of the kingdom of heaven through the preaching of the gospel. They were thereby compelled, on the one hand, to force upon the prophecy a meaning irreconcilable with the words themselves, and, on the other hand, to seek for its fulfilment in historical particulars to some extent of very subordinate importance.

Even the predicted nearness of the time ("it is a little while") does not suit the exclusive reference to the establishment of the new covenant, or the founding of the Christian church. The period of 520 years, which elapsed before the birth of Christ, cannot be called a little or short time, as Calovius supposes, "in comparison with the time that had passed since either the promulgation of the law or the promulgation of the *protevangelium*," inasmuch as five hundred are not מְעַט in relation to fifteen hundred, and the proposal to go back to the *protevangelium* is evidently merely a loophole of perplexity. Nor can מְעַט הִיא be explained on the hypothesis that the measure of time here is not a human one, but the divine measure, according to which a thousand years are equal to one day. "For whoever speaks to men, must speak of things according to a human method of thinking; or if he do not, he must make it clear that this is the case. The prophet lays stress upon the brevity of the time, for the purpose of comforting. And only what is short in the eyes of men is fitted for this" (Hengstenberg). The shaking of the heathen world did not first begin with the birth of Christ, but commenced shortly after the time of Haggai. It is true that under Darius Hystaspes the Persian empire was still standing at the summit of its power; but its shaking began under his successor Xerxes, and came very plainly to light in his war against Greece. "Even then there were forebodings that the time of this empire would soon be accomplished, and the rapid conquests of Alexander gave fulfilment to this foreboding. And even his power, which seemed destined to last for ever, very speedily succumbed to the lot of all temporal things. *Inde* (says Livy) *morte Alexandri distractum in multa regna, dum ad se quisque opes rapiunt lacerantes viribus, a summo culmine fortunæ ad ultimum finem centum quinquaginta annos stetit.* The two most powerful kingdoms that grew out of the monarchy of Alexander, viz. the Syrian and Egyptian, destroyed one another. The Romans now attained to the government of the world; but at the very time when they appeared to be at the summit of their greatness, their shaking had very considerably advanced" (Hengstenberg). The circumstance that the prophet mentions the shaking of heaven and earth before the shaking of all the heathen, cannot furnish any valid ground

for objecting to these allusions; nor can it force us to the conclusion that the words are only to be understood as denoting "great political shakings, whereby the power of the heathen would be broken, their pride humbled, and so the susceptibility for salvation be evoked among them." For even if such events do shake the world, and are poetically represented as earthquakes, even if they were regarded by the nations as heralds of the approaching destruction of the world, because the impression they produced upon the mind was as if heaven and earth were falling to pieces; all this does not satisfy the words, which do not express the subjective emotion, but announce real facts. The shaking of heaven and earth, of the sea and of the dry land, is indeed partially effected by violent earthquakes and wonderful signs in the sky, and was typified by such judgments as the flood; but it is only fully accomplished at the breaking up of the present condition of the world in the destruction of this heaven and this earth. The prophet mentions at the very outset the utmost and the last that God will do, to clear away all existing hindrances to the completion of His kingdom in glory, and then passes on to the shakings of the world of nations which prepare the way for and lead on to this result, just as Micah in ch. iv. comes back from the most remote future to the less remote, and then to the immediate future. For the shakings of the heathen, by which their power will be broken and the dissolution of heathenism and of the ungodly power of the world will be effected, do not reach their end with the coming of Christ and the establishment of the Christian church: but just as the kingdom of the world maintains its standing by the side of the kingdom of heaven established by Christ upon the earth, until the return of our Lord to judgment; so does the shaking of the heathen and of the kingdoms of the nations continue till every power which rises against the Almighty God and His Christ is broken, and the world which has been thrown into confusion by the sin of men, and is made subject to corruptibility on their account, shall perish, and the new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, for which we are looking, shall be established (2 Pet. iii. 12, 13).[1]

[1] Aug. Koehler also assumes that the ultimate fulfilment of our prophecy will not take place till the second coming of Christ, although he is

But if the shaking of the heathen commenced before the coming of Christ in the flesh, and will continue till His second coming in glory, we must not restrict the fulfilment of the predicted moral consequences of this shaking—namely, that the heathen come and consecrate their possessions to the Lord for the glorification of His house, to the conversion of the heathen to Christ, and their entrance into the Christian church —but must also regard the desire for the living God, awakened by the decay of heathendom and its religions, which was manifested in the adoption of Judaism by the more pious heathen, as a prelude to the fulfilment which commenced with the spread of the gospel among the Gentiles, and must include not only the presentation of dedicatory offerings τῶν ἀλλυφύλων and of gifts τῶν ἔξωθεν ἐθνῶν, with which the temple was adorned according to Josephus, *de Bell. Jud.* ii. 17, 3, but also the presents of king Artaxerxes and his counsellors, which Ezra received on his return to Jerusalem to carry with him for the

of opinion that, generally speaking, it has not been fulfilled in the manner originally intended. Starting, for example, with the fact that the fulfilment of the events predicted by Haggai and the coming of the day of Jehovah are one and the same, and that according to Mal. iii. 1, 23 the day of Jehovah was to be preceded by the coming of a messenger, to prepare the way for Jehovah to come to His temple, Koehler assumes that the fulfilment of these events ought to have taken place with the coming of Jesus of Nazareth, to establish the new covenant as the Messiah. But, inasmuch as Israel was still without such moral preparation as would allow of the coming of Jehovah being a blessing to it, and rejected its Messiah, there occurred an event in connection with this rejection of Jesus on the part of Israel, which not only put a stop to the fulfilment of the prophecies, the realization of which had commenced with the coming of Jesus, but introduced a partial modification. "The new covenant," he says, "which was established by the Lord in His incarnation, was not at first a blessing to Israel, but to the heathen world. Instead of setting up His kingdom over the earth, with Zion as the centre, the Lord returned to heaven, and there took possession of the throne above all thrones. But Israel was smitten with the ban, and scattered among the heathen nations. The sacred places which were to be glorified by the valuables of all the heathen, had become unclean through Israel's sin, and were given up to destruction in consequence." In his opinion there is a coming of Jehovah still in the future. Jesus will return from heaven again, but not till Israel shall have been converted to the Messiah it rejected. Then will the prophecies of Haggai that remained unfulfilled at the first coming of Jesus be accomplished, but in the only way that is still possible, since the former holy

temple (Ezra vii. 15 sqq.).[1] Yea, even the command of king Darius Hystaspes to his vicegerent, which no doubt reached Jerusalem after our prophecy had been uttered, not only to allow the work at this house of God to continue, but also to deliver to the elders of Judah what was required for the building as well as for the requirements of the daily sacrificial worship out of the moneys raised by taxation on this side the river (Ezra vi. 6–10), may at any rate be regarded as a pledge of the certain fulfilment of the divine promise uttered by Haggai. But whilst the honour paid to the temple of Zerubbabel on the part of the heathen and heathen princes by the presentation of sacrifices and dedicatory offerings must not be overlooked, as preludes to the promised filling of this house with the riches of the Gentiles, we must not look to this outward glorification of the temple at Jerusalem for the true fulfilment of our prophecy, even if it had exceeded Solomon's temple in glory. This first took place with the coming of Christ, and that not

places of Israel have been destroyed, and the heathen world has already participated in the new covenant, and has at any rate in part already become the people of God. Consequently the events predicted by Haggai (ii. 6–9) have not been fulfilled; for the valuable possessions of all the heathen have not been applied to the glorification of the sanctuary of Jehovah built by Zerubbabel, and there has not been a place of peace created there in the midst of the judgments that were to fall upon the heathen world. But the fault of this rests purely upon Israel. And so also it is in the impenitence of Israel that we have to look for the reason why the shaking of the heaven and the earth, and all the heathen, which Haggai announced as מְעַט הִיא, has been postponed for more than 500 years. This is Koehler's view. But if there had really been any foundation in the Scriptures for this view, and the predictions of our prophet had not been fulfilled in the manner intended, the fault would not rest entirely in the impenitence of Israel, but would fall in part upon God Himself, for having sent His Son, not at the proper time, or when the time was accomplished, but too early, namely, before Israel was in that moral condition which would allow of the coming of the Messiah to become a blessing to it, whether God was mistaken as to the proper time for sending His Son, or in His judgment as to the moral condition of Israel. If Koehler had put this clearly to his own mind, he would certainly have hesitated before he built up a view on the basis of an erroneous idea of the day of the Lord, which necessarily leads to the denial not only of the divine prescience or the προγνωσις του Θεου, but also of the supernatural character of the Old Testament prophecy.

[1] We must not, however, include the additions to Zerubbabel's temple

in the fact that Jesus visited the temple and taught in it, and as the incarnate *Logos*, in whom the "glory of Jehovah" that filled the temple of Solomon dwelt in its truest essence as δόξα ὡς μονογενοῦς παρὰ πατρός, glorified the temple of stone with His presence, but by the fact that Christ raised up the true temple of God not built with human hand (John ii. 19), *i.e.* that He exalted the kingdom of God shadowed forth in the temple at Jerusalem to its true essence. We must draw a distinction between the substance and form, the kernel and the shell, of the prophecy. The temple, as the place where the Lord dwelt in the midst of Israel in a visible symbol of His gracious presence, was the seat and concentration of the kingdom of God, which had its visible embodiment in the temple so long as the old covenant lasted. In this respect the rebuilding of the temple that had been destroyed was a sign and pledge of the restoration of the kingdom of God, which had been broken up through the

undertaken by Herod the Great for the sake of beautifying it, because, although Herod was a Gentile by descent, the work was not undertaken from any love to the Lord, but (as Calvin, and Hengstenberg, *Christol.* iii. pp. 289–90, have already observed) with the intention of securing the fulfilment of Haggai's prophecy, in order to prevent the coming of the kingdom of God, his fear of which was that it would put an end to his earthly sway. His intention is obvious enough from the address communicated by Josephus (*Ant.* xv. 11, 1), through which Herod endeavoured to win over the people to his plan. After telling them that the temple built after the return of the fathers from exile was still sixty cubits lower than that of Solomon, which he proposed to add, he proceeded thus: "But since I am now by God's will your governor, and I have had peace a long time, and have gained great riches and large revenues, and, what is the principal thing of all, I am at amity with and well regarded by the Romans, who, if I may so say, are the rulers of the whole world," etc. The allusion to our prophecy, as Hengstenberg says, is unmistakeable here. He tries to prove that all the conditions which it lays down for the glorifying of the temple have now been realized. "All nations," by whom the building of the temple is to be promoted, are equivalent in his esteem to "the Romans, who are the rulers of the whole world." He whom God has called to the government has gold and silver enough. And the words "in this place will I give peace" are now fulfilled. The manner in which he strained every nerve to fulfil the words "the glory will be greater," is evident from § 3, where it is stated that "he laid out larger sums of money upon them than had been done before him, till it seemed that no one else had so greatly adorned the temple as he had done."

banishment of Israel among the heathen, and the attitude of those who returned from exile towards the building of the temple was a sign of their internal attitude towards the Lord and His kingdom. If, then, the old men who had seen the temple in its former glory wept aloud at the laying of the foundation of the new building, because in comparison with the former it was as nothing in their eyes, this mourning was occasioned not so much by the fact that the new temple would not be so beautiful and majestic a building as that of Solomon had been, as by the fact that the poverty of the new building set before their eyes the wretched condition of the kingdom of God. This true or deeper ground for their mourning, which might very well give rise to the question whether the Lord would restore His former gracious relation to Israel, or at any rate would restore it now, is met by the divine promise published by Haggai to the people, which attaches itself in form to the existing circumstances, and accordingly promises for the future a glorification of the temple which will outshine the glory of the former one. If we look at the thought itself which is expressed in this form, it is the following: The Lord will one day exalt His kingdom, which is so deeply degraded and despised, to a glory which will far surpass the glory of the kingdom of God at the time of Solomon, and that by the fact that all the heathen nations will dedicate their possessions to it. This glorification of the house of God commenced with the introduction of the kingdom of heaven, which Jesus Christ preached, and of which He laid the foundation in His church. And whilst the stone-temple at Jerusalem built by Zerubbabel and splendidly finished by Herod fell into ruins, because the Jews had rejected their Saviour, and crucified Him, this has been carried on through the spread of the kingdom of God among the nations of the earth, and will be completed at the end of the course of this world; not, however, by the erection of a new and much more glorious temple in Jerusalem, but in the founding of the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God upon the new earth, after the overthrow of all the powers of the world that are hostile to God. This holy city will have the glory of God (ἡ δόξα τοῦ Θεοῦ = כְּבוֹד יְהוָה), but no temple; because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. Into this holy city of God will the kings

of the earth bring their glory and honour, and the heathen who are saved will walk therein (Rev. xxi. 10, 11, 22–24). Thus the promise covers the entire development of the kingdom of God to the end of days.

This was the sense in which the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. xii. 26, 27) understood our prophecy. In order, namely, to give emphasis to his admonition, not to expose themselves to still severer punishment than fell upon those who hardened themselves under the Old Testament against the incomplete revelation of God, by rejecting the far more perfect revelation of God in Christ, he quotes our prophecy, and shows from it (ver. 26), that at the founding of the old covenant only a comparatively small shaking of the earth took place; whereas for the times of the new covenant there had been predicted a shaking not only of the earth, but also of the heaven, which indicated that what was moveable was to be altered, as made for that purpose, that the immoveable might remain. The author of this epistle consequently brings out the fundamental thought of our prophecy, in which its fulfilment culminates, viz. that everything earthly must be shaken and altered, that the immoveable, *i.e.* the *βασιλεία ἀσάλευτος*, may remain, or in other words, that the whole of the earthly creation must perish, in order that the kingdom of God may be shown to be immoveably permanent. He does not, however, thereby represent the predicted shaking of heaven and earth "as still in the future," as Koehler supposes; but, as his words in ver. 28 (cf. ver. 22), "Wherefore we, receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace," clearly show, he takes it as having already commenced, and looks upon the whole period, from the coming of Christ in the flesh till His coming again in glory, as one *continuum*.

Vers. 10–19. RETURN OF THE BLESSINGS OF NATURE.—Ver. 10. On the 24th day of the ninth month of the same year, that is to say, exactly three months after the congregation had resumed the building of the temple (cf. ch. i. 15), and about two months after the second prophecy (ch. ii. 1), a new word of the Lord was uttered through Haggai to the people. It was now time, since the despondency which had laid hold of the people a few weeks after the recommencement of the

building had been dispelled by the consolatory promises in vers. 6–9, and the work was vigorously pursued, to confirm the people in the fidelity which they had manifested, by bestowing upon them the blessing which had been withdrawn. To this end Haggai received the commission to make it perfectly clear to the people, that the curse which had rested upon them since the building of the temple had been neglected, had been nothing but a punishment for their indolence in not pushing forward the work of the Lord, and that from that time forth the Lord would bestow His blessing upon them again. The ninth month (*Khislēv*) corresponds very nearly to the period between the middle of November and the middle of December, when the sowing of the winter crops, that commenced after the feast of tabernacles, was finished, and the autumnal rain (early rain) had set in, so that in the abundant fall of this rain they might discern a trace of the divine blessing. The word of God was as follows: Ver. 11. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Ask now the priests for instruction, saying,* Ver. 12. *Behold, one carries holy flesh in the lappet of his garment, and touches with his lappet the bread, and that which is boiled, the wine, and the oil, and any kind of food: does it then become holy? And the priests answered and said, No.* Ver. 13. *And Haggai said, If one who is unclean on account of a corpse touches all this, does it become unclean? And the priests answered and said, It does become unclean.* Ver. 14. *Then Haggai answered and said, So is this people, and so this nation before my face, is the saying of Jehovah; and so is all the work of their hands, and what they offer to me there: it is unclean.*" In order to impress most earnestly upon the hearts of the people the fact that it was through their sin that they brought upon themselves the failure of crops that had hitherto prevailed, viz. as a punishment from God, the prophet proposes two questions concerning holy and clean for the priests to answer, in order that he may make an application of the answer they give to the moral condition of the nation. *Tōrâh* in ver. 11, without the article, is used in its primary signification of instruction, and is governed by שָׁאַל, *accus. rei:* to ask a person anything, for to ask or solicit anything from him. The first question has reference to the communication of the holiness of holy objects to other objects brought into contact with them: whether, if a person carried holy flesh in

the lappet of his garment,[1] and touched any food with the lappet, it would become holy in consequence. *Hēn*, behold, pointing to an action as possible, has almost the force of a conditional particle, "if," as in Isa. liv. 15, Jer. iii. 1 (cf. Ewald, § 103, *g*). "Holy flesh" is flesh of animals slain as sacrifices, as in Jer. xi. 15. *Nâzīd*, that which is boiled, boiled food (Gen. xxv. 29; 2 Kings iv. 38 sqq.). The priests answer the question laid before them quite correctly with "No;" for, according to Lev. vi. 20, the lappet of the dress itself was made holy by the holy flesh, but it could not communicate this holiness any further. The second question (ver. 13) has reference to the spread of legal defilement. טְמֵא נֶפֶשׁ is not one who is unclean in his soul; but, as Lev. xxii. 4 shows, it is synonymous with טְמֵא לָנֶפֶשׁ in Num. v. 2, ix. 10, "defiled on a soul;" and this is a contraction of טְמֵא לְנֶפֶשׁ אָדָם, or טְמֵא לְנֶפֶשׁ מֵת, in Num. ix. 6, 7, "defiled on (through) the soul of a dead man" (Num. vi. 6; Lev. xxi. 11: see at Lev. xix. 28), hence one who has been defiled through touching a dead body. This uncleanness was one of the strongest kinds; it lasted seven days, and could only be removed by his being twice purified with sprinkling water, prepared from the ashes of the red cow (see at Num. xix.). This question the priests also answered correctly. According to Num. xix. 22, he who was defiled by touching a dead body made everything unclean that he touched. The prophet now applies these provisions of the law to the ethical relation in which the people stood to Jehovah. "So is this people before me, saith Jehovah." הַגּוֹי is quite synonymous with הָעָם, as in Zeph. ii. 9, without any subordinate meaning of a contemptuous kind, which could at the most be contained in *hazzeh* (this), but in that case would apply to *hâ'âm* just as well. *Kēn*, *ita*, refers to the substance of the two legal questions in vers. 12 and 13. The nation, in its attitude towards the Lord, resembles, on the one hand, a man who carries holy flesh in the lappet of his garment, and on the other hand, a man

[1] Luther: "in the *geren* of his dress." The *gehren*, or *gehre*, middle high German *gêre*, old high German *kêro* (English *goar*), is a triangular piece, forming the gusset of a dress or shirt, then that portion of the dress in which it is inserted, viz. below the waist, probably derived from the Gothic *gáis*, and the conjectural root *geisan* = to thrust or strike (Weigand, *Germ. Dict.*).

who has become unclean through touching a corpse. "Israel also possesses a sanctuary in the midst of its land,—namely, the place which Jehovah has chosen for His own abode, and favoured with many glorious promises. But just as no kind of food, neither bread nor vegetables, neither wine nor oil, is sanctified by the fact that a man touches it with his sanctified garment, so will all this not be rendered holy by the fact that it is planted in the soil of the land which surrounds and encloses the sanctuary of Jehovah. For though the land itself becomes a holy land in consequence, it cannot spread this holiness any further, nor communicate it to what grows upon it. All that Israel raises on its holy land, whether corn, wine, or oil, remains unholy or common. No special blessing rests upon the fruits of this land, on account of the holiness of the land itself, so as of necessity to produce fruitfulness as its result; nor, on the other hand, does it in itself communicate any curse. But if, as experience shows, a curse is resting notwithstanding upon the productions of this land, it arises from the fact that they are unclean because Israel has planted them. For Israel is utterly unclean on account of its neglect of the house of Jehovah, like a man who has become unclean through touching a corpse. Everything that Israel takes hold of, or upon which it lays its hand, everything that it plants and cultivates, is from the very first affected with the curse of uncleanness; and consequently even the sacrifices which it offers there upon the altar of Jehovah are unclean" (Koehler). *Shâm*, there, *i.e.* upon the altar built immediately after the return from Babylon (Ezra iii. 3).

The prophet explains these words in vers. 15–19 by representing the failure of the crops, and the curse that has hitherto prevailed, as a punishment from God for having been wanting in faithfulness to the Lord (vers. 15–17), and promises that from that time forward the blessing of God shall rest upon them again (vers. 18, 19). Ver. 15. "*And now, direct your heart from this day and onward, before stone was laid to stone at the temple of Jehovah.* Ver. 16. *Before this was, did one come to the heap of sheaves of twenty (in measure), there were ten: did he come to the vat to draw fifty buckets, there were twenty.* Ver. 17. *I have smitten you with blasting, and with mildew, and with hail, all the work of your hands; and not one of you (turned) to me, is the saying of Jehovah.*" The object to which they are

to direct their heart, *i.e.* to give heed, is not to be supplied from ch. i. 5, 7, "to your ways" (Ros. and others), but is contained substantially in vers. 16 and 17, and is first of all indicated in the words "from this day," etc. They are to notice what has taken place from this day onwards. וּמַעְלָה, lit. upwards, then further on. Here it is used not in the sense of forwards into the future, but, as the explanatory clause which follows (from before, etc.) clearly shows, in that of backwards into the past. *Mitterem*, literally "from the not yet of the laying . . . onwards," *i.e.* onwards from the time when stone was laid upon stone at the temple; in other words, when the building of the temple was resumed, backwards into the past; in reality, therefore, the time before the resuming of the building of the temple: for *min* in *mitterem* cannot be taken in any other sense than in the parallel מִיּוֹם which precedes it, and מִהְיוֹתָם which follows in ver. 16. The objection which Koehler raises to this cannot be sustained. מִהְיוֹתָם, from their existence (backwards). Most of the modern commentators take the suffix as referring to a noun, *yâmīm* (days), to be supplied from ver. 15; but it appears much simpler to take it as a neuter, as Mark and others do, in the sense of "before these things were or were done, viz. this day, and this work of laying stone upon stone," etc. The meaning is not doubtful, viz. looking backwards from the time when the building of the temple was resumed, in other words, before the point of time. בָּא commences a new sentence, in which facts that they had experienced are cited, the verb בָּא being used conditionally, and forming the protasis, the apodosis to which is given in וְהָיְתָה. If one came to a heap of sheaves of twenty measures (*s*e*'âh* is probably to be supplied: LXX. *σάτα*), they became ten. A heap of sheaves (*'ărēmâh* as in Ruth iii. 7), from which they promised themselves twenty measures, yielded, when threshed, no more than ten, *i.e.* only the half of what they expected. They experienced just the same at the pressing of the grapes. Instead of fifty buckets, which they expected, they obtained only twenty. *Yeqebh* was the vat into which the juice flowed when pressed out of the grapes. *Châsaph*, lit. to lay bare, here to draw out, as in Isa. xxx. 14; and *pūrâh*, in Isa. lxiii. 3, the pressing-trough, here a measure, probably the measure which was generally obtained from one filling of the wine-

press with grapes (LXX. μετρητής). Ver. 17 gives the reason why so small a result was yielded by the threshing-floor and wine-press. Jehovah smote you with blasting and mildew. These words are a reminiscence of Amos iv. 9, to which passage the last words of the verse also refer. To the disease of the corn there is also added the hail which smote the vines, as in Ps. lxxviii. 47. *'Eth kol-ma'ăsēh*, all the labour of the hands, *i.e.* all that they had cultivated with great toil, is a second accusative, "which mentions the portion smitten" (Hitzig). The perfectly unusual construction אֵין־אֶתְכֶם אֵלַי does not stand for אֵין בָּכֶם אֲ, *non fuit in vobis qui* (Vulg.), nor is אֶתְכֶם used for אִתְּכֶם, "with you;" but אֵין־אֶתְכֶם either stands for אֵינְכֶם, the suffix which was taken as a verbal suffix used as an accusative being resolved into the accusative (cf. Ewald, § 262, *d*); or it is the accusative used in the place of the subject, that is to say, אֵת is to be taken in the sense of "as regards," *quoad* (Ewald, § 277, p. 683): "as far as you are concerned, there was not (one) turning himself to me." אֵלַי, to me, *sc.* turning himself or being converted; though there is no necessity to supply שָׁבִים, as the idea is implied in the word אֶל, as in Hos. iii. 3 and 2 Kings vi. 11.

After this appeal to lay to heart the past time during which the blessing had been withheld, Haggai called upon the people in vers. 18 and 19 to fix their eyes upon the time which was commencing with that very day. Ver. 18. "*Direct your heart, then, from this day and onward, from the four and twentieth day of the ninth (month); namely, from the day when the foundation of the temple of Jehovah was laid, direct your heart.* Ver. 19. *Is the seed still in the granary? and even to the vine, and pomegranate, and olive-tree, it has not borne: from this day forward will I bless.*" The twenty-fourth day of the ninth month was the day on which Haggai uttered this word of God (ver. 10). Hence וָמַעְלָה in ver. 18 is to be understood as denoting the direction towards the future (Itala, Vulg., and many comm.). This is evident partly from the fact, that only in that case can the repetition of שִׂימוּ לְבַבְכֶם in ver. 18 (end), and the careful announcement of the point of time (from the twenty-fourth day, etc.), be simply and naturally explained, and partly from the fact that *min hayyōm hazzeh* (from this day) is not explained here, as in ver. 15, by a clause pointing back to

the past (like *mitterem sūm* in ver. 15), but simply by a precise notice of the day referred to, and that in the last clause of ver. 19 this day is clearly described as the commencement of a new era. For there can be no doubt whatever that in *min hayyōm hazzeh* in ver. 19 the *terminus a quo* mentioned in ver. 18*a* is resumed. But the time mentioned in ver. 18, "from the day that the foundation of the temple was laid," etc., and also the contents of the first two clauses of ver. 19, to the effect that there was no more seed in the granary, and that the vine, etc., had not borne, do not appear to harmonize with this. To remove the first of these difficulties, Ros., Maurer, Ewald, and others have taken לְמִן־הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר־יִסַּד as the *terminus ad quem*, and connected it with the foregoing *terminus a quo*: "observe the time," which reaches back from the present day, the twenty-fourth of the ninth month, to the day when the foundation of the temple was laid in the reign of Cyrus (Ezra iii. 10). They have thus taken לְמִן in the sense of וְעַד. But it is now generally admitted that this is at variance with the usage of the language; even Ewald and Gesenius acknowledge this (see Ew., *Lehrbuch*, § 218, *b*, and Ges. *Thes.* p. 807). לְמִן is never equivalent to עַד or וְעַד, but invariably forms the antithesis to it (compare, for example, Judg. xix. 30, 2 Sam. vii. 6, and Mic. vii. 12). Now, since *l'min hayyōm* cannot mean "to the time commencing with the laying of the foundation of the temple," but must mean "from the day when the foundation of the temple was laid," Hitzig and Koehler have taken לְמִן הַיּוֹם וגו׳ as an explanatory apposition to מִיּוֹם עֶשְׂרִים וגו׳, and assume that through this apposition the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, in the second year of Darius, is expressly designated as the day on which the foundation was laid for the temple of Jehovah. But this assumption is not only in direct contradiction to Ezra iii. 10, where it is stated that the foundation of the temple was laid in the reign of Cyrus, in the second year after the return from Babylon, but also makes the prophet Haggai contradict himself in a manner which can only be poorly concealed by any *quid pro quo* at variance with the language, viz. (*a*) by identifying the words of ver. 15, "when stone was laid to stone at the temple of Jehovah," which, according to their simple meaning, express the carrying on or continuance of the building, with the laying of the foundation-

stone; secondly (*b*), by understanding the statement, "they will work at the house of Jehovah on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month" (ch. i. 14, 15), not according to its natural meaning as relating to their building upon the foundation already laid, but as signifying the removal of the rubbish and the procuring of wood and stone, that is to say, as referring to the preparations for building; and lastly (*c*), by explaining אֲשֶׁר יֻסַּד וגו׳ in ver. 19 as signifying the laying of a fresh or second foundation. These assumptions are so forced, that if there were not a simpler and easier way of removing the difficulty raised, we would rather assume that there had been a corruption of the text. But the thing is not so desperate as this. In the first place, we must pronounce the opinion that לְמִן הַיּוֹם וגו׳ is an explanatory apposition to מִיּוֹם עֶשְׂרִים וגו׳ an unfounded one. The position of the *athnach* in וְמֵעָלָה furnishes no tenable proof of this. Nor can the assumption that *l'min* is synonymous with *min* be sustained. In support of the statement, "that *l'min* only differs from *min* in the greater emphasis with which it is spoken," Ewald (§ 218, *b*) has merely adduced this passage, Hag. ii. 18, which is supposed to exhibit this with especial clearness, but in which, as we have just shown, such an assumption yields no appropriate meaning. לְמִן followed by עַד or וְעַד does indeed occur in several instances in such a connection, that it appears to be used instead of the simple *min*. But if we look more closely at the passages (*e.g.* Ex. xi. 7; Judg. xix. 30; 2 Sam. vii. 6), the ל is never superfluous; and *l'min* is simply used in cases where the definition so introduced is not closely connected with what goes before, but is meant to be brought out as an independent assertion or additional definition, so that in all such cases the ל "has the peculiar force of a brief allusion to something not to be overlooked, a retrospective glance at the separate parts, or a rapid summary of the whole, like our 'with regard to,' 'as regards' (Lat. *quoad*);" and it only fails to correspond entirely to this, "from the fact that ל is only expressible in the softest manner, and indeed in our language can hardly be expressed in words at all, though it quite perceptibly yields this sense" (Ewald, § 310). לְמִקְצָת is also used in this sense in Dan. i. 18 instead of מִקְצָת (ver. 15), whilst in other cases (*e.g.* in לְמֶרְחוֹק in 2 Sam. vii. 19) it indicates the

direction to a place or towards an object (Ewald, § 218, *b*).[1] In the verse before us, the לְ before מִן corresponds exactly to the German *anlangend, betreffend*, concerning, as to, *sc.* the time, from the day when the foundation of the temple was laid, and is used to give prominence to this assertion, and by the prominence given to it to preclude any close connection between the definition of the time so introduced and what goes before, and to point to the fact that the following definition contains a fresh subject of discourse. The expression שִׂימוּ לְבַבְכֶם, which closes the sentence commencing with לְמִן הַיּוֹם, and which would be somewhat tautological and superfluous, if the day of the laying of the foundation of the temple coincided with the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, also points to this. What space of time it is to which Haggai gives prominence in these words, as one which they are to lay to heart, is shown in ver. 19, "Is the seed still in the granary?" etc. That this question is not to be taken in the sense of a summons to proceed now with good heart to sow the summer crops, which were not sown till January, and therefore were still in the granary, as Hitzig supposes, has been pointed out by Koehler, who also correctly observes that the prophet first of all reminds his hearers of the mournful state of things in the past (not "in the present," as he says), that they may thoroughly appreciate the promise for the future. For even if the question to be answered with "no," viz. whether the corn is still in the granary, were to be referred to the present, what follows, viz. that the fruit-trees have not borne, would not suit this, since not having borne is a past thing, even if it merely related to the last year, although there is no ground for any such limitation of the words. And if in ver. 19 the prophet directs the attention of his hearers to the past, we must also understand the chronological datum immediately preceding as relating to the past as well, and must assume that the words

[1] Koehler's objection to this explanation of *l'mērâchōq*, viz. that with the verb *dibber*, the object concerning which a person is spoken to, is never introduced with the preposition לְ, is groundless. "With verbs of speaking לְ yields the same double meaning as אֶל, according to the context," *i.e.* it can denote the person spoken to, and the person or thing to which the speaking refers, or about which a person is speaking (cf. Gen. xxi. 7; Num. xxiii. 23; Isa. v. 1; Mic. ii. 6; Jer. xxiii. 9; Ps. iii. 3, xi. 1, xxvii. 8; and Ewald, § 217, *c*).

from לְמִן הַיּוֹם in ver. 18 to לֹא נִיָּצֵא in ver. 19 contain a parenthetical thought; that is to say, we must assume that the prophet, in order to set clearly before their minds the difference between the past when the building of the temple was suspended, and the future commencing with that very day, before promising the blessing of God to be enjoyed in the future, directs another look at the past, and that from the time of the laying of the foundation of the temple in the reign of Cyrus to his own time, and reminds them once more of the want of blessing which they had experienced from that time forth even to the present time. Koehler's objection to this view cannot be sustained. He says, "The Jews are to observe the time from that day forward, namely, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month (backwards); the time from the laying of the foundation of the temple in the reign of Cyrus (forwards). . . . Such a mode of expression seems utterly out of place." But this only affects the erroneous assumption, that the definition "from the day of the laying of the foundation of the temple" is merely a more precise explanation of the previous definition, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, and falls to the ground of itself as soon as these two definitions are separated, as the expression and the matter in hand require. The second objection—namely, that the day of the laying of the foundation of the temple in the reign of Cyrus does not suit as a *terminus a quo* for the commencement of the withdrawal of the divine favour, or for the infliction of a curse upon the people, inasmuch as the Jews were not punished because they laid the foundation for the house of Jehovah, but simply because they neglected the house of God, that is to say, because they desisted from the building they had already begun—is one that would have some force if an interval of at least one or more years had elapsed between the laying of the foundation of the temple and the suspension of the building. But if the work of building was interrupted immediately after the foundation had been laid, as is evident from Ezra iii. 10, as compared with ch. iv., Haggai might with perfect propriety describe the whole time from the laying of the foundation of the temple in the reign of Cyrus to the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of the second year of Darius as a time without blessing, without there being any necessity for him expressly to deduct

the few weeks which elapsed between the laying of the foundation-stone and the suspension of the work of building, any more than the last three months, in which the work had been resumed again. The last three months could hardly be taken into account, because they fell for the most part in the period after the last harvest; so that if this had proved to be a bad one, the cause would be still in force. The prophet could therefore very properly inquire whether the seed was still in the granary, to which they would be obliged to answer No, because the miserable produce of the harvest was already either consumed for the supply of their daily wants, or used up for the sowing which was just ended. זֶרַע, seed, is not what is sown, but what the sowing yields, the corn, as in Lev. xxvii. 30, Isa. xxiii. 3, Job xxxix. 12. *Mᵉgûrâh* = *mammᵉgûrâh* in Joel i. 17, a barn or granary, from *gûr*, *ἀγείρεσθαι*, *congregari*. The following words, וְעַד־הַגֶּפֶן וגו׳, are really appended to the thought contained *implicite* in the first clause: the corn has not borne, and even to the vine, etc., it has borne nothing. נָשָׂא is indefinite: it has not borne = has borne nothing. It shall be different in future. From this day, *i.e.* from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, Jehovah will bless again, *i.e.* grant a blessing, namely, so that fruitful seasons will come again, and fields and fruit-trees bear once more. There is no necessity to supply a definite object to אֲבָרֵךְ.

Vers. 20–23. Renewal of the Promise of Salvation. —Ver. 20. On the same day on which the Lord promised to the people the return of the blessings of nature, Haggai received a second revelation, which promised to the community the preservation and care of the Davidic monarchy, represented for the time by Zerubbabel, in the midst of the storms that were about to burst upon the power of the world. Ver. 21. "*Speak to Zerubbabel the governor of Judah thus: I shake the heaven and the earth.* Ver. 22. *And I will overthrow the throne of the kingdoms; and destroy the might of the kingdoms of the nations; and will overthrow the war-chariots, and those who ride in them: and horses and their riders shall fall, one by the sword of the other.* Ver. 23. *On that day, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, will I take thee, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant, is the saying of Jehovah, and make thee as a signet-ring: for I have chosen*

thee, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts." אֲנִי מְרַעֵשׁ does not stand for הִנְנִי מְרַעֵשׁ, but the participial clause is to be taken as a circumstantial clause: If I shake heaven and earth, I overthrow (cf. Ewald, § 341, *c* and *d*). The words point back to the shaking of the world predicted in vers. 6, 7. When this shaking takes place, then shall the throne of the kingdoms be thrown down, and their might be destroyed. The singular כִּסֵּא is used collectively, or rather distributively: "every throne of the kingdoms." The throne is the symbol of the monarchy, or of the government (cf. Dan. vii. 27); not in this sense, however, that "the prophet regarded all the kingdoms of the earth as one combined power in contradistinction to the people of God, or as a single power, as the power of the world, which was sitting as mistress at the time upon the throne of the earth" (Koehler). The plural *mamlâkhōth* does not agree with this, since every kingdom had both a king and a throne. The continuance of this throne rests upon the strength (*chōzeq*) of the heathen kingdoms, and this again upon their military power, their war-chariots, horses, and riders. These are to be overthrown and fall to the ground, and indeed by one another's swords. One hostile kingdom will destroy another, and in the last conflict the heathen hosts will annihilate one another (compare Ezek. xxxviii. 21; Zech. xiv. 13). At that time, when the dominion of the heathen had thus collapsed, Jehovah would take Zerubbabel and set or make him as a signet-ring. The verb *'eqqach* (will I take) simply serves to introduce the following act as one of importance, as for example in Deut. iv. 20 and 2 Kings xiv. 21. The meaning of the figurative expression, to make Zerubbabel as a signet-ring, is evident from the importance of the signet-ring in the eyes of an oriental, who is accustomed to carry his signet-ring constantly about with him, and to take care of it as a very valuable possession. It is introduced with the same idea in the Song of Sol. viii. 6, "Lay me as a signet-ring upon thy breast, as a signet-ring in thine arms;" and it is in the same sense that Jehovah says of Jehoiachin in Jer. xxii. 24, "Though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim were even a signet-ring upon my right hand, *i.e.* a possession from which it would be thought impossible that I should separate myself, yet would I tear thee away from thence." Hence we obtain this thought for our present passage, namely, that on the

day on which Jehovah would overthrow the kingdoms of the nations, He would make Zerubbabel like a signet-ring, which is inseparable from its possessor; that is to say, He would give him a position in which he would be and remain inseparably connected with Him (Jehovah), would therefore not cast him off, but take care of him as His valuable possession. This is the explanation given by Koehler (after Calvin, Osiander, and others); and he has also refuted the various explanations that differ from it. But in order clearly to understand the meaning of this promise, we must look at the position which Zerubbabel occupied in the community of Israel on its return from exile. For we may at the outset assume that the promise did not apply to his own particular person, but rather to the official post he held, from the fact that what is here predicted was not to take place till after the overthrow of the throne and might of all the kingdoms of the heathen, and therefore could not take place in Zerubbabel's lifetime, inasmuch as, although the fall of this or the other kingdom might be looked for in the course of one generation, the overthrow of all kingdoms and the coming of all the heathen to fill the temple of the Lord with their possessions (ver. 7) certainly could not. Zerubbabel was (Persian) governor in Judah, and had no doubt been selected for this office because he was prince of Judah (Ezra i. 8), and as son of Shealtiel was a descendant of the family of David (see at ch. i. 1). Consequently the sovereignty of David in its existing condition of humiliation, under the sovereignty of the imperial power, was represented and preserved in his appointment as prince and governor of Judah, so that the fulfilment of the divine promise of the eternal perpetuation of the seed of David and his kingdom was then associated with Zerubbabel, and rested upon the preservation of his family. Hence the promise points to the fact, that at the time when Jehovah would overthrow the heathen kingdoms, He would maintain and take good care of the sovereignty of David in the person of Zerubbabel. For Jehovah had chosen Zerubbabel as His servant. With these words the Messianic promise made to David was transferred to Zerubbabel and his family among David's descendants, and would be fulfilled in his person in just the same way as the promise given to David, that God would make him the highest among the kings of the

earth (Ps. lxxxix. 27). The fulfilment culminates in Jesus Christ, the son of David and descendant of Zerubbabel (Matt. i. 12; Luke iii. 27), in whom Zerubbabel was made the signet-ring of Jehovah. Jesus Christ has raised up the kingdom of His father David again, and of His kingdom there will be no end (Luke i. 32, 33). Even though it may appear oppressed and deeply humiliated for the time by the power of the kingdoms of the heathen, it will never be crushed and destroyed, but will break in pieces all these kingdoms, and destroy them, and will itself endure for ever (Dan. ii. 44; Heb. xii. 28; 1 Cor. xv. 24).

ZECHARIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

1. THE PROPHET.—*Zechariah*, זְכַרְיָה—*i.e.* not *μνήμη Κυρίου, memoria Domini*, remembrance of God (Jerome and others), nor God's renown (Fürst), but he whom God remembers (LXX. *Ζαχαρίας*, Vulg. Zacharias)—is a name of frequent occurrence in the Old Testament. Our prophet, like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, was of priestly descent,—a son of *Berechiah*, and grandson of Iddo (ch. i. 1, 7), the chief of one of the priestly families, that returned from exile along with Zerubbabel and Joshua (Neh. xii. 4). He followed his grandfather in that office under the high priest Jehoiakim (Neh. xii. 16), from which it has been justly concluded that he returned from Babylon while still a youth, and that his father died young. This also probably serves to explain the fact that Zechariah is called *bar 'Iddo'*, the son (grandson) of Iddo, in Ezra v. 1 and vi. 14, and that his father is passed over. He commenced his prophetic labours in the second year of Darius Hystaspes, only two months later than his contemporary Haggai, in common with whom he sought to stimulate the building of the temple (Ezra v. 1, vi. 14), and that while he was still of youthful age, as we may infer partly from the facts quoted above, and partly from the epithet הַנַּעַר הַלָּז (the young man) in ch. ii. 8 (4), which refers to him. On the other hand, the legends handed down by the fathers, which are at variance with the biblical accounts, to the effect that Zechariah returned from Chaldæa at an advanced age, that he had previously predicted to Jozadak the birth of his son Joshua, and to Shealtiel the birth of Zerubbabel, and had shown to Cyrus his victory over Crœsus and Astyages by means of a miracle (Ps. Dor., Ps. Epiph., Hesych., and others), are not worth noticing. It is impossible to determine how long

his prophetic labours lasted. We simply know from ch. vii. 1, that in the fourth year of Darius he announced a further revelation from God to the people, and that his last two oracles (ch. ix.–xiv.) fall within a still later period. All that the fathers are able to state with regard to the closing portion of his life is, that he died at an advanced age, and was buried near to Haggai; whilst the contradictory statement, in a Cod. of Epiph., to the effect that he was slain under Joash king of Judah, between the temple and the altar, has simply arisen from our prophet being confounded with the Zechariah mentioned in 2 Chron. xxiv. 20–23.

2. THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH contains, besides the brief word of God, which introduces his prophetic labours (ch. i. 1–6), four longer prophetic announcements: viz. (1) a series of seven visions, which Zechariah saw during the night, on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, in the second year of Darius (ch. i. 7–vi. 8), together with a symbolical transaction, which brought the visions to a close (vi. 9–15); (2) the communication to the people of the answer of the Lord to a question addressed to the priests and prophets by certain Judæans as to their continuing any longer to keep the day appointed for commemorating the burning of the temple and Jerusalem by the Chaldæans as a fast-day, which took place in the fourth year of Darius (ch. vii. and viii.); (3) a burden, *i.e.* a prophecy of threatening import, concerning the land of Hadrach, the seat of the ungodly world-power (ch. ix.–xi.); and (4) a burden concerning Israel (ch. xii.–xiv.). The last two oracles, which are connected together by the common epithet *massâ'*, are distinguished from the first two announcements not only by the fact that the headings contain neither notices as to the time, nor the prophet's name, but also by the absence of express allusions to the circumstances of Zechariah's own times, however unmistakeably the circumstances of the covenant nation after the captivity form the historical background of these prophecies also; whilst there is in general such a connection between their contents and the prophetic character of the night-visions, that ch. ix.–xiv. might be called a prophetic description of the future of the kingdom of God, in its conflict with the kingdoms of the world, as seen in the night-visions. For example, in the night-visions, as a sequel

to-Haggai, who had predicted two months before the overthrow of the might of all the kingdoms of the world and the preservation of Zerubbabel in the midst of that catastrophe (Hag. ii. 20–23), the future development of the kingdom of God is unfolded to the prophet in its principal features till its final completion in glory. The *first* vision shows that the shaking of the kingdoms of the world predicted by Haggai will soon occur, notwithstanding the fact that the whole earth is for the time still quiet and at rest, and that Zion will be redeemed from its oppression, and richly blessed (ch. i. 7–17). The realization of this promise is explained in the following visions: in the *second* (ii. 1–4), the breaking in pieces of the kingdoms of the world, by the four smiths who threw down the horns of the nations; in the *third* (ch. ii. 5–17), the spread of the kingdom of God over the whole earth, through the coming of the Lord to His people; in the *fourth* (ch. iii.), the restoration of the church to favour, through the wiping away of its sins; in the *fifth* (ch. iv.), the glorifying of the church through the communication of the gifts of the Spirit; in the *sixth* (ch. v.), the sifting out of sinners from the kingdom of God; in the *seventh* (ch. vi. 1–8), the judgment, through which God refines and renews the sinful world; and *lastly*, in the symbolical transaction which closes the visions (ch. vi. 9–15), the completion of the kingdom of God by the Sprout of the Lord, who combines in His own person the dignity of both priest and king. If we compare with these the last two oracles, in ch. ix.-xi. we have first of all a picture of the judgment upon the kingdoms of the world, and of the establishment of the Messianic kingdom, through the gathering together of the scattered members of the covenant nation, and their exaltation to victory over the heathen (ch. ix. x.), and secondly, a more minute description of the attitude of the Lord towards the covenant nation and the heathen world (ch. xi.); and in ch. xii.-xiv. we have an announcement of the conflict of the nations of the world with Jerusalem, of the conversion of Israel to the Messiah, whom it once rejected and put to death (ch. xii. xiii.); and lastly, of the final attack of the heathen world upon the city of God, with its consequences,—namely, the purification and transfiguration of Jerusalem into a holy dwelling-place of the Lord, as King over the whole earth (ch. xiv.); so that in both oracles the develop-

ment of the Old Testament kingdom of God is predicted until its completion in the kingdom of God, which embraces the whole earth. The revelation from God, which stands between these two principal parts, concerning the continuance of the fast-days (ch. vii. viii.), does indeed divide the two from one another, both chronologically and externally; but substantially it forms the connecting link between the two, inasmuch as this word of God impresses upon the people the condition upon which the attainment of the glorious future set before them in the night-visions depends, and thereby prepares them for the conflicts which Israel will have to sustain according to the announcement in ch. ix.–xiv., until the completion of the kingdom of God in glory.

Thus all the parts of the book hang closely together; and the objection which modern critics have offered to the unity of the book has arisen, not from the nature of the last two longer oracles (ch. ix.–xiv.), but partly from the dogmatic assumption of the rationalistic and naturalistic critics, that the biblical prophecies are nothing more than the productions of natural divination, and partly from the inability of critics, in consequence of this assumption, to penetrate into the depths of the divine revelation, and to grasp either the substance or form of their historical development, so as to appreciate it fully.[1] The current opinion of these critics, that the chapters in question date from the time before the captivity—viz. ch. ix.–xi. from a contemporary of Isaiah, and ch. xii.–xiv. from the last period before the destruction of the kingdom of Judah —is completely overthrown by the circumstance, that even in these oracles the condition of the covenant nation after the captivity forms the historical ground and starting-point for the proclamation and picture of the future development of the kingdom of God. The covenant nation, in its two parts, into which it had been divided since the severance of the kingdom at the death of Solomon, had been dispersed among the heathen like a flock without a shepherd (ch. x. 2). It is true that Judah had already partially returned to Jerusalem and the cities of Judah; but the daughter Zion had still "prisoners of

[1] For the history of these attacks upon the genuineness of the last part of Zechariah, and of the vindication of its genuineness, with the arguments *pro* and *con*, see my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, § 103, and Koehler's *Zechariah*, ii. p. 297 sqq.

hope" waiting for release (ch. ix. 11, 12, compared with ch. ii. 10, 11), and the house of Joseph or Ephraim was still to be gathered and saved (ch. x. 6–10). Moreover, the severance of Judah and Ephraim, which lasted till the destruction of both kingdoms, had ceased. The eye of Jehovah is now fixed upon *all* the tribes of Israel (ch. ix. 1); Judah and Ephraim are strengthened by God for a common victorious conflict with the sons of Javan (ix. 13); the Lord their God grants salvation to His people as a flock (ix. 16 compared with viii. 13); the shepherd of the Lord feeds them both as a single flock, and only abolishes the brotherhood between Judah and Israel by the breaking of his second staff (ch. xi. 14). Hence the jealousy between Judah and Ephraim, the cessation of which was expected in the future by the prophets before the captivity (cf. Isa. xi. 13; Hos. ii. 2; Ezek. xxxvii. 15 sqq.), is extinct; and all that remains of the severance into two kingdoms is the epithet house of Judah or house of Israel, which Zechariah uses not only in ch. ix.–xi., but also in the appeal in ch. viii. 13, which no critic has called in question. All the tribes form one nation, which dwells in the presence of the prophet in Jerusalem and Judah. Just as in the first part of our book Israel consists of Judah and Jerusalem (i. 19, cf. ii. 12), so in the second part the burden pronounced upon Israel (xii. 1) falls upon Jerusalem and Judah (xii. 2, 5 sqq., xiv. 2, 14); and just as, according to the night-visions, the imperial power has its seat in the land of the north and of the south (ch. vi. 6), so in the last oracles Asshur (the north land) and Egypt (the south land) are types of the heathen world (ch. x. 10). And when at length the empire of the world which is hostile to God is more precisely defined, it is called Javan,—an epithet taken from Dan. viii. 21, which points as clearly as possible to the times after the captivity, inasmuch as the sons of Javan never appear as enemies of the covenant nation before the captivity, even when the Tyrians and Philistines are threatened with divine retribution for having sold to the Javanites the prisoners of Judah and Jerusalem (Joel iii. 6).

On the other hand, the differences which prevail between the first two prophecies of Zechariah and the last two are not of such a character as to point to two or three different prophets. It is true that in ch. ix.–xiv. there occur no visions, no

angels taking an active part, no Satan, no seven eyes of God; but Amos also, for example, has only visions in the second part, and none in the first; whilst the first part of Zechariah contains not only visions, but also, in ch. i. 1–6, ch. vii. and viii., simple prophetic addresses, and symbolical actions not only in ch. vi. 9–15, but also in ch. xi. 4–17. The angels and Satan, which appear in the visions, are also absent from ch. vii. and viii.; whereas the angel of Jehovah is mentioned in the last part in ch. xii. 8, and the saints in ch. xiv. 5 are angels. The seven eyes of God are only mentioned in two visions (ch. iii. 9 and iv. 10); and the providence of God is referred to in ch. ix. 1, 8, under the epithet of the eye of Jehovah. This also applies to the form of description and the language employed in the two parts. The visionary sights are described in simple prose, as the style most appropriate for such descriptions. The prophecies in word are oratorical, and to some extent are rich in bold figures and similes. This diversity in the prophetic modes of presentation was occasioned by the occurrence of peculiar facts and ideas, with the corresponding expressions and words; but it cannot be proved that there is any constant diversity in the way in which the same thing or the same idea is described in the two parts, whereas there are certain unusual expressions, such as מֵעֲבִר וּמְשֻׁבָ (in ch. vii. 14 and ix. 8) and הֶעֱבִיר in the sense of *removere* (in ch. iii. 4 and xiii. 2), which are common to both parts. Again, the absence of any notice as to the time in the headings in ch. ix. 1 and xii. 1 may be explained very simply from the fact, that these prophecies of the future of the kingdom are not so directly associated with the prophet's own time as the visions are, the first of which describes the condition of the world in the second year of Darius. The omission of the name of the author from the headings no more disproves the authorship of the Zechariah who lived after the captivity, than the omission of the name from Isa. xv. 1, xvii. 1, xix. 1, disproves Isaiah's authorship in the case of the chapters named. All the other arguments that have been brought against the integrity or unity of authorship of the entire book, are founded upon false interpretations and misunderstandings; whereas, on the other hand, the integrity of the whole is placed beyond the reach of doubt by the testimony of tradition, which is to be regarded as of all the greater value

in the case of Zechariah, inasmuch as the collection of the prophetic writings, if not of the whole of the Old Testament canon, was completed within even less than a generation after the propliet's death.

Zechariah's mode of prophesying presents, therefore, according to the cursory survey just given, a very great variety. Nevertheless, the crowding together of visions is not to be placed to the account of the times after the captivity; nor can any foreign, particularly Babylonian, colouring be detected in the visions or in the prophetic descriptions. The habit of leaning upon the prophecies of predecessors is not greater in his case than in that of many of the prophets before the captivity. The prophetic addresses are to some extent rich in repetitions, especially in ch. vii. and viii., and tolerably uniform; but in the last two oracles they rise into very bold and most original views and figures, which are evidently the production of a lively and youthful imagination. This abundance of very unusual figures, connected with much harshness of expression and transitions without intermediate links, makes the work of exposition a very difficult one; so that Jerome and the rabbins raise very general, but still greatly exaggerated, lamentations over the obscurity of this prophet. The diction is, on the whole, free from Chaldaisms, and formed upon the model of good earlier writers. For the proofs of this, as well as for the exegetical literature, see my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, p. 310 sqq.

EXPOSITION.

INTRODUCTORY ADMONITION.—CHAP. I. 1–6.

The first word of the Lord was addressed to the prophet Zechariah in the eighth month of the second year of the reign of Darius, and therefore about two months after Haggai's first prophecy and the commencement of the rebuilding of the temple, which that prophecy was intended to promote (compare ver. 1 with Hag. i. 1 and 15), and a few weeks after Haggai's prophecy of the great glory which the new temple would

receive (Hag. ii. 1–9). Just as Haggai encouraged the chiefs and the people of Judah to continue vigorously the building that had been commenced by this announcement of salvation, so Zechariah opens his prophetic labours with the admonition to turn with sincerity to the Lord, and with the warning not to bring the same punishment upon themselves by falling back into the sins of the fathers. This exhortation to repentance, although it was communicated to the prophet in the form of a special revelation from God, is actually only the introduction to the prophecies which follow, requiring thorough repentance as the condition of obtaining the desired salvation, and at the same time setting before the impenitent and ungodly still further heavy judgments.[1] Ver. 1. *Bachōdesh hassh'mīnī* does not mean "on the eighth new moon" (Kimchi, Chr. B. Mich., Koehl.); for *chōdesh* is never used in chronological notices for the new moon, or the first new moon's day (see at Ex. xix. 1). The day of the eighth month is left indefinite, because this was of no importance whatever to the contents of this particular address. The word of the Lord was as follows: Ver. 2. "*Jehovah was angry with wrath concerning your fathers.* Ver. 3. *And thou shalt say to them, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Return ye to me, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, so will I return to you, saith Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 4. *Be not like your fathers, to whom the former prophets cried, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Turn now from your evil ways, and from your evil actions! But they hearkened not, and paid no attention to me, is the saying of Jehovah.*" The statement in ver. 2 contains the ground for the summons to turn, which the prophet is to address to the people, and is therefore placed before וְאָמַרְתָּ in ver. 3, by which this summons is introduced. Because the Lord was very angry concerning the fathers, those who are living now are to repent with sincerity of heart. The noun *qetseph* is added as the object to the verb, to give it greater force. The nation had experienced the severe anger of God at the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, and of Jerusalem

[1] "The prophet is thus instructed by God, that, before exhibiting to the nation the rich blessings of God for them to look at under the form of symbolical images, he is to declare the duty of His people, or the condition upon which it will be becoming in God to grant them an abundant supply of these good things."—VITRINGA, *Comm. in Sach.* p. 76.

and the temple, and also in exile. The statement in ver. 15, that Jehovah was angry מְעַט, is not at variance with this; for מְעַט does not refer to the strength of the anger, but to its duration. וְאָמַרְתָּ is the *perf.* with *Vav consec.*, and is used for the imperative, because the summons to repentance follows as a necessary consequence from the fact stated in ver. 2 (cf. Ewald, § 342, *b* and *c*). אֲלֵהֶם does not refer to the fathers, which might appear to be grammatically the simplest interpretation, but to the contemporaries of the prophet, addressed in the pronoun *your* fathers, the existing generation of Judah. שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי does not presuppose that the people had just fallen away from the Lord again, or had lost all their pleasure in the continuance of the work of building the temple, but simply that the return to the Lord was not a perfect one, not a thorough conversion of heart. So had Jehovah also turned to the people again, and had not only put an end to the sufferings of exile, but had also promised His aid to those who had returned (compare אֲנִי אִתְּכֶם in Hag. i. 13); but the more earnestly and the more thoroughly the people turned to Him, the more faithfully and the more gloriously would He bestow upon them His grace and the promised salvation. This admonition is shown to be extremely important by the threefold "saith the Lord of Zebaoth," and strengthened still further in ver. 4 by the negative turn not to do like the fathers, who cast the admonitions of the prophets to the winds. The "earlier prophets" are those before the captivity (cf. ch. vii. 7, 12). The predicate רִאשֹׁנִים points to the fact that there was a gap between Zechariah and his predecessors, namely the period of the exile, so that Daniel and Ezekiel, who lived in exile, are overlooked; the former because his prophecies are not admonitions addressed to the people, the latter because the greater part of his ministry fell in the very commencement of the exile. Moreover, when alluding to the admonitions of the earlier prophets, Zechariah has not only such utterances in his mind as those in which the prophets summoned the people to repentance with the words שׁוּבוּ וגו׳ (*e.g.* Joel ii. 13; Hos. xiv. 2, 3; Isa. xxxi. 6; Jer. iii. 12 sqq., vii. 13, etc.), but the admonitions, threatenings, and reproofs of the earlier prophets generally (compare 2 Kings xvii. 13 sqq.). The *chethîb* מעליכם is to be read מֵעֲלִילֵיכֶם, a plural form from עֲלִילָה, and is to be retained, since the

preposition *min* is wanting in the *keri;* and this reading has probably only arisen from the offence taken at the use of the plural form *'ălīlīm*, which does not occur elsewhere, in the place of *'ălīlōth*, although there are many analogies to such a formation, and feminine forms frequently have plurals in ־ִים, either instead of those in ־וֹת or in addition to them.

A reason for the warning not to resist the words of the Lord, like the fathers, is given in vers. 5, 6, by an allusion to the fate which they brought upon themselves through their disobedience. Ver. 5. "*Your fathers, where are they? And the prophets, can they live for ever?* Ver. 6. *Nevertheless my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not overtake your fathers, so that they turned and said, As Jehovah purposed to do to us according to our ways and our actions, so has He done to us?*" The two questions in ver. 5 are meant as denials, and are intended to anticipate the objection which the people might have raised to the admonitions in ver. 4, to the effect that not only the fathers, but also the earlier prophets, had died long ago; and therefore an allusion to things that had long since passed by could have no force at all for the present generation. Zechariah neutralizes this objection by saying: Your fathers have indeed been long dead, and even the prophets do not, or cannot, live for ever; but notwithstanding this, the words of the earlier prophets were fulfilled in the case of the fathers. The words and decrees of God uttered by the prophets did reach the fathers, so that they were obliged to confess that God had really done to them what He threatened, *i.e.* had carried out the threatened punishment. אַךְ, only, in the sense of a limitation of the thing stated: yet, nevertheless (cf. Ewald, § 105, *d*). דְּבָרַי and חֻקַּי are not the words of ver. 4, which call to repentance, but the threats and judicial decrees which the earlier prophets announced in case of impenitence. דְּבָרַי as in Ezek. xii. 28, Jer. xxxix. 16. חֻקַּי, the judicial decrees of God, like *chōq* in Zeph. ii. 2. *Hissīg*, to reach, applied to the threatened punishments which pursue the sinner, like messengers sent after him, and overtake him (cf. Deut. xxviii. 15, 45). Biblical proofs that even the fathers themselves did acknowledge that the Lord had fulfilled His threatenings in their experience, are to be found in the mournful psalms written in captivity

(though not exactly in Ps. cxxvi. and cxxxvii., as Koehler supposes), in Lam. ii. 17 (עשׂה יהוה אשׁר זמם, upon which Zechariah seems to play), and in the penitential prayers of Daniel (ix. 4 sqq.) and of Ezra (ix. 6 sqq.), so far as they express the feeling which prevailed in the congregation.

I. THE NIGHT-VISIONS.—CHAP. I. 7–VI. 15.

Three months after his call to be a prophet through the first word of God that was addressed to him, Zechariah received a comprehensive revelation concerning the future fate of the people and kingdom of God, in a series of visions, which were given him to behold in a single night, and were interpreted by an angel. This took place, according to ver. 7, "*on the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, i.e. the month Shebat, in the second year of Darius*," that is to say, exactly five months after the building of the temple had been resumed (Hag. i. 15), with which fact the choice of the day for the divine revelation was evidently connected, and two months after the last promise issued through Haggai to the people, that the Lord would from henceforth bless His nation, and would glorify it in the future (Hag. ii. 10–23). To set forth in imagery this blessing and glorification, and to exhibit the leading features of the future conformation of the kingdom of God, was the object of these visions, which are designated in the introduction as "word of Jehovah," because the pictures seen in the spirit, together with their interpretation, had the significance of verbal revelations, and are to some extent still further explained by the addition of words of God (cf. i. 14 sqq., ii. 10–17). As they were shown to the prophet one after another in a single night, so that in all probability only short pauses intervened between the different views; so did they present a substantially connected picture of the future of Israel, which was linked on to the then existing time, and closed with the prospect of the ultimate completion of the kingdom of God.

FIRST VISION: THE RIDER AMONG THE MYRTLES. —CHAP. I. 8–17.

Ver. 8. "*I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtles which were in the hollow; and behind him red, speckled, and white horses.* Ver. 9. *And I said, What are these, my lord? Then the angel that talked with me said to me, I will show thee what these are.* Ver. 10. *And the man who stood among the myrtles answered and said, These are they whom Jehovah hath sent to go through the earth.* Ver. 11. *And they answered the angel of Jehovah who stood among the myrtles, and said, We have gone through the earth, and, behold, the whole earth sits still, and at rest.* Ver. 12. *Then the angel of Jehovah answered and said, Jehovah of hosts, how long wilt Thou not have compassion upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, with whom Thou hast been angry these seventy years?* Ver. 13. *And Jehovah answered the angel that talked with me good words, comforting words.* Ver. 14. *And the angel that talked with me said to me, Preach, and say, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, I have been jealous for Jerusalem and Zion with great jealousy,* (Ver. 15) *and with great wrath I am angry against the nations at rest: for I had been angry for a little, but they helped for harm.* Ver. 16. *Therefore thus saith Jehovah, I turn again to Jerusalem with compassion: my house shall be built in it, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, and the measuring line shall be drawn over Jerusalem.* Ver. 17. *Preach as yet, and say, Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, My cities shall yet swell over with good, and Jehovah will yet comfort Zion, and will yet choose Jerusalem.*" The prophet sees, during the night of the day described in ver. 7 (הַלַּיְלָה is the accusative of duration), in an ecstatic vision, not in a dream but in a waking condition, a rider upon a red horse in a myrtle-bush, stopping in a deep hollow, and behind him a number of riders upon red, speckled, and white horses (*sūsīm* are horses with riders, and the reason why the latter are not specially mentioned is that they do not appear during the course of the vision as taking any active part, whilst the colour of their horses is the only significant feature). At the same time he also sees, in direct proximity to himself, an angel who interprets the vision, and farther off (ver. 11) the angel of Jehovah also standing or stopping among the myrtle-bushes,

and therefore in front of the man upon a red horse, to whom the riders bring a report, that they have gone through the earth by Jehovah's command and have found the whole earth quiet and at rest; whereupon the angel of Jehovah addresses a prayer to Jehovah for pity upon Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, and receives a good consolatory answer, which the interpreting angel conveys to the prophet, and the latter publicly proclaims in vers. 14–17. The rider upon the red horse is not to be identified with the angel of Jehovah, nor the latter with the *angelus interpres*. It is true that the identity of the rider and the angel of Jehovah, which many commentators assume, is apparently favoured by the circumstance that they are both standing among the myrtles (*'ōmēd*, stood; see vers. 8, 10, and 11); but all that follows from this is that the rider stopped at the place where the angel of Jehovah was standing, *i.e.* in front of him, to present a report to him of the state of the earth, which he had gone through with his retinue. This very circumstance rather favours the diversity of the two, inasmuch as it is evident from this that the rider upon the red horse was simply the front one, or leader of the whole company, who is brought prominently forward as the spokesman and reporter. If the man upon the red horse had been the angel of Jehovah Himself, and the troop of horsemen had merely come to bring information to the man upon the red horse, the troop of horsemen could not have stood behind him, but would have stood either opposite to him or in front of him. And the different epithets applied to the two furnish a decisive proof that the angel of the Lord and "the angel that talked with me" are not one and the same. The angel, who gives or conveys to the prophet the interpretation of the vision, is constantly called "the angel that talked with me," not only in ver. 9, where it is preceded by an address on the part of the prophet to this same angel, but also in vers. 13 and 14, and in the visions which follow (ch. ii. 2, 7, iv. 1, 4, v. 5, 10, vi. 4), from which it is perfectly obvious that הַדֹּבֵר בִּי denotes the function which this angel performs in these visions (*dibber bi*, signifying the speaking of God or of an angel within a man, as in Hos. i. 2, Hab. ii. 1, Num. xii. 6, 8). His occupation, therefore, was to interpret the visions to the prophet, and convey the divine revelations, so that he was only an *angelus interpres* or *collocutor*.

This angel appears in the other visions in company with other angels, and receives instructions from them (ch. ii. 5–8); and his whole activity is restricted to the duty of conveying higher instructions to the prophet, and giving him an insight into the meaning of the visions, whereas the angel of Jehovah stands on an equality with God, being sometimes identified with Jehovah, and at other times distinguished from Him. (Compare the remarks upon this subject in the comm. on Genesis, *Pent.* i. p. 185 sqq.) In the face of these facts, it is impossible to establish the identity of the two by the arguments that have been adduced in support of it. It by no means follows from ver. 9, where the prophet addresses the mediator as "my lord," that the words are addressed to the angel of the Lord; for neither he nor the *angelus interpres* has been mentioned before; and in the visions persons are frequently introduced as speaking, according to their dramatic character, without having been mentioned before, so that it is only from what they say or do that it is possible to discover who they are. Again, the circumstance that in ver. 12 the angel of the Lord presents a petition to the Supreme God on behalf of the covenant nation, and that according to ver. 13 Jehovah answers the *angelus interpres* in good, comforting words, does not prove that he who receives the answer must be the same person as the intercessor: for it might be stated in reply to this, as it has been by Vitringa, that Zechariah has simply omitted to mention that the answer was first of all addressed to the angel of the Lord, and that it was through him that it reached the mediating angel; or we might assume, as Hengstenberg has done, that "Jehovah addressed the answer directly to the mediating angel, because the angel of the Lord had asked the question, not for his own sake, but simply for the purpose of conveying consolation and hope through the mediator to the prophet, and through him to the nation generally."

There is no doubt that, in this vision, both the locality in which the rider upon the red horse, with his troop, and the angel of the Lord had taken up their position, and also the colour of the horses, are significant. But they are neither of them easy to interpret. Even the meaning of *m'tsullâh* is questionable. Some explain it as signifying a "shady place," from צֵל, a shadow; but in that case we should expect the form

m'tsillâh. There is more authority for the assumption that *m'tsullâh* is only another form for *m'tsūlâh*, which is the reading in many codd., and which ordinarily stands for the depth of the sea, just as in Ex. xv. 10 *tsâlal* signifies to sink into the deep. The Vulgate adopts this rendering: *in profundo*. Here it signifies, in all probability, a deep hollow, possibly with water in it, as myrtles flourish particularly well in damp soils and by the side of rivers (see Virgil, *Georg.* ii. 112, iv. 124). The article in *bamm'tsullâh* defines the hollow as the one which the prophet saw in the vision, not the ravine of the fountain of Siloah, as Hofmann supposes (*Weissagung u. Erfüllung*, i. p. 333). The hollow here is not a symbol of the power of the world, or the abyss-like power of the kingdoms of the world (Hengstenberg and M. Baumgarten), as the author of the Chaldee paraphrase *in Babele* evidently thought; for this cannot be proved from such passages as ch. x. 16, Isa. xliv. 27, and Ps. cvii. 24. In the myrtle-bushes, or myrtle grove, we have no doubt a symbol of the theocracy, or of the land of Judah as a land that was dear and lovely in the estimation of the Lord (cf. Dan. viii. 9, xi. 16), for the myrtle is a lovely ornamental plant. Hence the hollow in which the myrtle grove was situated, can only be a figurative representation of the deep degradation into which the land and people of God had fallen at that time. There is a great diversity of opinion as to the significance of the colour of the horses, although all the commentators agree that the colour is significant, as in ch. vi. 2 sqq. and Rev. vi. 2 sqq., and that this is the only reason why the horses are described according to their colours, and the riders are not mentioned at all. About two of the colours there is no dispute. אָדֹם, red, the colour of the blood; and לָבָן, white, brilliant white, the reflection of heavenly and divine glory (Matt. xvii. 2, xxviii. 3; Acts i. 10), hence the symbol of a glorious victory (Rev. vi. 2). The meaning of *s'ruqqīm* is a disputed one. The LXX. have rendered it ψαροὶ καὶ ποικίλοι, like בְּרֻדִּים אֲמֻצִּים in ch. vi. 3; the Itala and Vulgate, *varii;* the Peshito, *versicolores*. Hence *sūsīm s'ruqqīm* would correspond to the ἵππος χλωρός of Rev. vi. 8. The word *s'ruqqīm* only occurs again in the Old Testament in Isa. xvi. 8, where it is applied to the tendrils or branches of the vine, for which *sōrēq* (Isa. v. 2; Jer. ii. 21) or *s'rēqâh* (Gen. xlix. 11) is

used elsewhere. On the other hand, Gesenius (*Thes. s.v.*) and others defend the meaning red, after the Arabic أشقر, the red horse, the fox, from شقر, to be bright red; and Koehler understands by *sūsīm s'ruqqīm*, bright red, fire-coloured, or bay horses. But this meaning cannot be shown to be in accordance with Hebrew usage: for it is a groundless conjecture that the vine branch is called *sōrēq* from the dark-red grapes (Hitzig on Isa. v. 2); and the incorrectness of it is evident from the fact, that even the Arabic شقر does not denote dark-red, but bright, fiery red. The Arabic translator has therefore rendered the Greek πυρρός by أشقر in Cant. v. 9; but πυρρός answers to the Hebrew אָדֹם, and the LXX. have expressed *sūsīm 'ădummīm* by ἵπποι πυρροί both here and in ch. vi. 2. If we compare this with ch. vi. 2, where the chariots are drawn by red (*'ădummīm*, πυρροί), black (*sh'chōrīm*, μέλανες), white (*l'bhânīm*, λευκοί), and speckled (*b'ruddīm*, ψαροί) horses, and with Rev. vi., where the first rider has a white horse (λευκός), the second a red one (πυρρός), the third a black one (μέλας), the fourth a pale horse (χλωρός), there can be no further doubt that three of the colours of the horses mentioned here occur again in the two passages quoted, and that the black horse is simply added as a fourth; so that the *s'ruqqīm* correspond to the *b'ruddīm* of ch. vi. 3, and the ἵππος χλωρός of Rev. vi. 8, and consequently *sârōq* denotes that starling kind of grey in which the black ground is mixed with white, so that it is not essentially different from *bârōd*, speckled, or black covered with white spots (Gen. xxxi. 10, 12).

By comparing these passages with one another, we obtain so much as certain with regard to the meaning of the different colours,—namely, that the colours neither denote the lands and nations to which the riders had been sent, as Hävernick, Maurer, Hitzig, Ewald, and others suppose; nor the three imperial kingdoms, as Jerome, Cyril, and others have attempted to prove. For, apart from the fact that there is no foundation whatever for the combination proposed, of the red colour with the south as the place of light, or of the white with the west,

the fourth quarter of the heavens would be altogether wanting. Moreover, the riders mentioned here have unquestionably gone through the earth in company, according to vers. 8 and 11, or at any rate there is no intimation whatever of their having gone through the different countries separately, according to the colour of their respective horses; and, according to ch. vi. 6, not only the chariot with the black horses, but that with the white horses also, goes into the land of the south. Consequently the colour of the horses can only be connected with the mission which the riders had to perform. This is confirmed by Rev. vi., inasmuch as a great sword is there given to the rider upon the red horse, to take away peace from the earth, that they may kill one another, and a crown to the rider upon the white horse, who goes forth conquering and to conquer (ver. 2), whilst the one upon the pale horse receives the name of Death, and has power given to him to slay the fourth part of the earth with sword, famine, and pestilence (ver. 8). It is true that no such effects as these are attributed to the riders in the vision before us, but this constitutes no essential difference. To the prophet's question, *mâh-'ēlleh*, what are these? *i.e.* what do they mean? the *angelus interpres*, whom he addresses as "my lord" (*'ădōnī*), answers, "I will show thee what these be;" whereupon the man upon the red horse, as the leader of the company, gives this reply: "These are they whom Jehovah hath sent to go through the earth;" and then proceeds to give the angel of the Lord the report of their mission, viz. "We have been through the earth, and behold all the earth sitteth still and at rest." The man's answer (*vayya'an*, ver. 10) is not addressed to the prophet or to the *angelus interpres*, but to the angel of the Lord mentioned in ver. 11, to whom the former, with his horsemen (hence the plural, "they answered," in ver. 11), had given a report of the result of their mission. The verb *'ânâh*, to answer, refers not to any definite question, but to the request for an explanation contained in the conversation between the prophet and the interpreting angel. הָאָרֶץ, in vers. 10 and 11, is not the land of Judah, or any other land, but the earth. The answer, that the whole earth sits still and at rest (יֹשֶׁבֶת וְשֹׁקֶטֶת denotes the peaceful and secure condition of a land and its inhabitants, undisturbed by any foe; cf. ch. vii. 7, 1 Chron. iv. 40, and Judg. xviii. 27), points

back to Hag. ii. 7, 8, 22, 23. God had there announced that for a little He would shake heaven and earth, the whole world and all nations, that the nations would come and fill His temple with glory. The riders sent out by God now return and report that the earth is by no means shaken and in motion, but the whole world sits quiet and at rest. We must not, indeed, infer from this account that the riders were all sent for the simple and exclusive purpose of obtaining information concerning the state of the earth, and communicating it to the Lord. For it would have been quite superfluous and unmeaning to send out an entire troop, on horses of different colours, for this purpose alone. Their mission was rather to take an active part in the agitation of the nations, if any such existed, and guide it to the divinely appointed end, and that in the manner indicated by the colour of their horses; viz. according to Rev. vi., those upon the red horses by war and bloodshed; those upon the starling-grey, or speckled horses, by famine, pestilence, and other plagues; and lastly, those upon the white horses, by victory and the conquest of the world.

In the second year of Darius there prevailed universal peace; all the nations of the earlier Chaldæan empire were at rest, and lived in undisturbed prosperity. Only Judæa, the home of the nation of God, was still for the most part lying waste, and Jerusalem was still without walls, and exposed in the most defenceless manner to all the insults of the opponents of the Jews. Such a state of things as this necessarily tended to produce great conflicts in the minds of the more godly men, and to confirm the frivolous in their indifference towards the Lord. As long as the nations of the world enjoyed undisturbed peace, Judah could not expect any essential improvement in its condition. Even though Darius had granted permission for the building of the temple to be continued, the people were still under the bondage of the power of the world, without any prospect of the realization of the glory predicted by the earlier prophets (Jer. xxxi. seq.; Isa. xl. sqq.), which was to dawn upon the nation of God when redeemed from Babylon. Hence the angel of the Lord addresses the intercessory prayer to Jehovah in ver. 12: How long wilt Thou not have compassion upon Jerusalem, etc.? For the very fact that the angel of the Lord, through whom Jehovah had formerly led His people and

brought them into the promised land and smitten all the enemies before Israel, now appears again, contains in itself one source of consolation. His coming was a sign that Jehovah had not forsaken His people, and His intercession could not fail to remove every doubt as to the fulfilment of the divine promises. The circumstance that the angel of Jehovah addresses an intercessory prayer to Jehovah on behalf of Judah, is no more a disproof of his essential unity with Jehovah, than the intercessory prayer of Christ in John xvii. is a disproof of His divinity. The words, "over which Thou hast now been angry for seventy years," do not imply that the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity predicted by Jeremiah (Jer. xxv. 11 and xxix. 10) were only just drawing to a close. They had already expired in the first year of the reign of Cyrus (2 Chron. xxxvi. 22; Ezra i. 1). At the same time, the remark made by Vitringa, Hengstenberg, and others, must not be overlooked,—namely, that these seventy years were completed twice, inasmuch as there were also (not perhaps quite, but nearly) seventy years between the destruction of Jerusalem and of the temple, and the second year of Darius. Now, since the temple was still lying in ruins in the second year of Darius, notwithstanding the command to rebuild it that had been issued by Cyrus (Hag. i. 4), it might very well appear as though the troubles of the captivity would never come to an end. Under such circumstances, the longing for an end to be put to the mournful condition of Judah could not fail to become greater and greater; and the prayer, "Put an end, O Lord, put an end to all our distress," more importunate than ever. Jehovah replied to the intercession of the angel of the Lord with good and comforting words. *D'bhârîm tôbhîm* are words which promise good, *i.e.* salvation (cf. Josh. xxiii. 14; Jer. xxix. 10). So far as they set before the people the prospect of the mitigation of their distress, they are *nichummîm*, consolations. The word *nichummîm* is a substantive, and in apposition to *d'bhârîm*. Instead of the form *nichummîm*, the *keri* has the form *nichumîm*, which is grammatically the more correct of the two, and which is written still more accurately *nichûmîm* in some of the codd. in Kennicott. The contents of these words, which are addressed to the interpreting angel either directly or through the medium of the angel of Jehovah, follow in the announcement which

the latter orders the prophet to make in vers. 14–17. קְרָא (ver. 14) as in Isa. xl. 6. The word of the Lord contains two things: (1) the assurance of energetic love on the part of God towards Jerusalem (vers. 14, 15); and (2) the promise that this love will show itself in the restoration and prosperity of Jerusalem (vers. 16, 17). קִנֵּא, to be jealous, applied to the jealousy of love as in Joel ii. 18, Num. xxv. 11, 13, etc., is strengthened by קִנֵּאתִי גְדוֹלָה. Observe, too, the use of the perfect קִנֵּאתִי, as distinguished from the participle קֹצֵף. The perfect is not merely used in the sense of "I have become jealous," expressing the fact that Jehovah was inspired with burning jealousy, to take Jerusalem to Himself (Koehler), but includes the thought that God has already manifested this zeal, or begun to put it in action, namely by liberating His people from exile. Zion, namely the mountain of Zion, is mentioned along with Jerusalem as being the site on which the temple stood, so that Jerusalem only comes into consideration as the capital of the kingdom. Jehovah is also angry with the self-secure and peaceful nations. The participle *qōtsēph* designates the wrath as lasting. *Sha'ănân*, quiet and careless in their confidence in their own power and prosperity, which they regard as secured for ever. The following word, אֲשֶׁר, *quod*, introduces the reason why God is angry, viz. because, whereas He was only a little angry with Israel, they assisted for evil. מְעָט refers to the duration, not to the greatness of the anger (cf. Isa. liv. 8). עָזְרוּ לְרָעָה, they helped, so that evil was the result (לְרָעָה as in Jer. xliv. 11), *i.e.* they assisted not only as the instruments of God for the chastisement of Judah, but so that harm arose from it, inasmuch as they endeavoured to destroy Israel altogether (cf. Isa. xlvii. 6). It is no ground of objection to this definition of the meaning of the words, that לְרָעָה in that case does not form an appropriate antithesis to מְעָט, which relates to time (Koehler); for the fact that the anger only lasted a short time, was in itself a proof that God did not intend to destroy His people. To understand עָזְרוּ לְרָעָה as only referring to the prolonged oppression and captivity, does not sufficiently answer to the words. Therefore (*lâkhēn*, ver. 16), because Jehovah is jealous with love for His people, and very angry with the heathen, He has now turned with compassion towards Jerusalem. The perfect שַׁבְתִּי is not purely prophetic, but describes the event as having

already commenced, and as still continuing. This compassion will show itself in the fact that the house of God is to be built in Jerusalem, and the city itself restored, and all the obstacles to this are to be cleared out of the way. The measuring line is drawn over a city, to mark off the space it is to occupy, and the plan upon which it is to be arranged. The *chethîb* קוה, probably to be read קָוֶה, is the obsolete form, which occurs again in 1 Kings vii. 23 and Jer. xxxi. 39, and was displaced by the contracted form קָו (*kerî*). But the compassion of God will not be restricted to this. The prophet is to proclaim still more ("cry yet," ver. 17, referring to the "cry" in ver. 14). The cities of Jehovah, *i.e.* of the land of the Lord, are still to overflow with good, or with prosperity. *Pûts*, to overflow, as in Prov. v. 16; and תִּפּוֹצֶינָה for תִּפּוֹצֶינָה (*vid.* Ewald, § 196, *c*). The last two clauses round off the promise. When the Lord shall restore the temple and city, then will Zion and Jerusalem learn that He is comforting her, and has chosen her still. The last thought is repeated in ch. ii. 16 and iii. 2.

In this vision it is shown to the prophet, and through him to the people, that although the immediate condition of things presents no prospect of the fulfilment of the promised restoration and glorification of Israel, the Lord has nevertheless already appointed the instruments of His judgment, and sent them out to overthrow the nations of the world, that are still living at rest and in security, and to perfect His Zion. The fulfilment of this consolatory promise is neither to be transferred to the end of the present course of this world, as is supposed by Hofmann (*Weiss. u. Erfüll.* i. 335), who refers to ch. xiv. 18, 19 in support of this, nor to be restricted to what was done in the immediate future for the rebuilding of the temple and of the city of Jerusalem. The promise embraces the whole of the future of the kingdom of God; so that whilst the commencement of the fulfilment is to be seen in the fact that the building of the temple was finished in the sixth year of Darius, and Jerusalem itself was also restored by Nehemiah in the reign of Artaxerxes, these commencements of the fulfilment simply furnished a pledge that the glorification of the nation and kingdom of God predicted by the earlier prophets would quite as assuredly follow.

SECOND VISION: THE FOUR HORNS AND THE FOUR SMITHS.—CHAP. I. 18–21 (HEB. BIB. CHAP. II. 1–4).

The second vision is closely connected with the first, and shows how God will discharge the fierceness of His wrath upon the heathen nations in their self-security (ch. i. 15). Ver. 18. "*And I lifted up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns.* Ver. 19. *And I said to the angel that talked with me, What are these? And he said to me, These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.* Ver. 20. *And Jehovah showed me four smiths.* Ver. 21. *And I said, What come these to do? And He spake to me thus: These are the horns which have scattered Judah, so that no one lifted up his head; these are now come to terrify them, to cast down the horns of the nations which have lifted up the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it.*" The mediating angel interprets the four horns to the prophet first of all as the horns which have scattered Judah; then literally, as the nations which have lifted up the horn against the land of Judah to scatter it. The horn is a symbol of power (cf. Amos vi. 13). The horns therefore symbolize the powers of the world, which rise up in hostility against Judah and hurt it. The number four does not point to the four quarters of the heaven, denoting the heathen foes of Israel in all the countries of the world (Hitzig, Maurer, Koehler, and others). This view cannot be established from ver. 10, for there is no reference to any dispersion of Israel to the four winds there. Nor does it follow from the perfect זֵרוּ that only such nations are to be thought of, as had already risen up in hostility to Israel and Judah in the time of Zechariah; for it cannot be shown that there were four such nations. At that time all the nations round about Judah were subject to the Persian empire, as they had been in Nebuchadnezzar's time to the Babylonian. Both the number four and the perfect *zērū* belong to the sphere of inward intuition, in which the objects are combined together so as to form one complete picture, without any regard to the time of their appearing in historical reality. Just as the prophet in ch. vi. sees the four chariots all together, although they follow one another in action, so may the four horns which are seen simultaneously represent nations which succeeded one

another. This is shown still more clearly by the visions in Dan. ii. and vii., in which not only the colossal image seen in a dream by Nebuchadnezzar (ch. ii.), but also the four beasts which are seen by Daniel to ascend simultaneously from the sea, symbolize the four empires, which rose up in succession one after the other. It is to these four empires that the four horns of our vision refer, as Jerome, Abarb., Hengstenberg, and others have correctly pointed out, since even the picturing of nations or empires as horns points back to Dan. vii. 7, 8, and viii. 3–9. Zechariah sees these in all the full development of their power, in which they have oppressed and crushed the people of God (hence the perfect *zērū*), and for which they are to be destroyed themselves. *Zârâh*, to scatter, denotes the dissolution of the united condition and independence of the nation of God. In this sense all four empires destroyed Judah, although the Persian and Grecian empires did not carry Judah out of their own land. The striking combination, "Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem," in which not only the introduction of the name of Israel between Judah and Jerusalem is to be noticed, but also the fact that the *nota acc.* אֵת is only placed before *Y'hūdâh* and *Yisrâ'ēl*, and not before *Y'rūshâlaim* also, is not explained on the ground that Israel denotes the kingdom of the ten tribes, Judah the southern kingdom, and Jerusalem the capital of the kingdom (Maurer, Umbreit, and others), for in that case *Israel* would necessarily have been repeated before *Judah*, and *'ēth* before *Y'rūshâlaim*. Still less can the name *Israel* denote the rural population of Judah (Hitzig), or the name *Judah* the princely house (Neumann). By the fact that *'ēth* is omitted before *Y'rūshâlaim*, and only *Vav* stands before it, Jerusalem is connected with Israel and separated from Judah; and by the repetition of *'ēth* before *Yisrâ'ēl*, as well as before *Y'hūdâh*, Israel with Jerusalem is co-ordinated with Judah. Kliefoth infers from this that "the heathen had dispersed on the one hand Judah, and on the other hand Israel together with Jerusalem," and understands this as signifying that in the nation of God itself a separation is presupposed, like the previous separation into Judah and the kingdom of the ten tribes. "When the Messiah comes," he says, "a small portion of the Israel according to the flesh will receive Him, and so constitute the genuine people of God and the true Israel, *the*

Judah; whereas the greater part of the Israel according to the flesh will reject the Messiah at first, and harden itself in unbelief, until at the end of time it will also be converted, and join the true Judah of Christendom." But this explanation, according to which *Judah* would denote the believing portion of the nation of twelve tribes, and *Israel* and *Jerusalem* the unbelieving, is wrecked on the grammatical difficulty that the cop. ו is wanting before אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל. If the names *Judah* and *Israel* were intended to be co-ordinated with one another as two different portions of the covenant nation as a whole, the two parts would necessarily have been connected together by the cop. *Vav*. Moreover, in the two co-ordinated names *Judah* and *Israel*, the one could not possibly stand in the spiritual sense, and the other in the carnal. The co-ordination of *'eth-Y'hūdâh* with *'eth-Yisrâ'ēl* without the cop. *Vav* shows that Israel is really equivalent to the *Jerusalem* which is subordinated to it, and does not contain a second member (or part), which is added to it,—in other words, that Israel with Jerusalem is merely an interpretation or more precise definition of *Y'hūdâh;* and Hengstenberg has hit upon the correct idea, when he takes Israel as the honourable name of Judah, or, more correctly, as an honourable name for the covenant nation as then existing in Judah. This explanation is not rendered questionable by the objection offered by Koehler: viz. that after the separation of the two kingdoms, the expression Israel always denotes either the kingdom of the ten tribes, or the posterity of Jacob without regard to their being broken up, because this is not the fact. The use of the name Israel for Judah after the separation of the kingdoms is established beyond all question by 2 Chron. xii. 1, xv. 17, xix. 8, xxi. 2, 4, xxiii. 2, xxiv. 5, etc.[1]

Jehovah then showed the prophet four *châr̂âṣhīm*, or workmen, *i.e.* smiths; and on his putting the question, "What have

[1] Gesenius has correctly observed in his *Thesaurus*, p. 1339, that "from this time (*i.e.* from the severance of the kingdom) the name of *Israel* began to be usurped by the whole nation that was then in existence, and was used chiefly by the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Deutero(?)-Isaiah, and after the captivity by Ezra and Nehemiah; from which it came to pass, that in the *Paralipomena*, even when allusion is made to an earlier period, *Israel* stands for Judah," although the proofs adduced in support of this from the passages quoted from the prophets need considerable sifting.

these come to do?" gave him this reply: "To terrify those," etc. For the order of the words מָה אֵלֶּה בָּאִים לַעֲשׂוֹת, instead of מָה לַעֲשׂוֹת אֵלֶּה בָּאִים, see Gen. xlii. 12, Neh. ii. 12, Judg. ix. 48. אֵלֶּה הַקְּרָנוֹת is not a nominative written absolutely at the head of the sentence in the sense of "these horns," for that would require הַקְּרָנוֹת הָאֵלֶּה; but the whole sentence is repeated from ver. 2, and to that the statement of the purpose for which the smiths have come is attached in the form of an apodosis: "these are the horns, etc., and they (the smiths) have come." At the same time, the earlier statement as to the horns is defined more minutely by the additional clause כְּפִי אִישׁ וגו׳, according to the measure, *i.e.* in such a manner that no man lifted up his head any more, or so that Judah was utterly prostrate. *Hachărīd*, to throw into a state of alarm, as in 2 Sam. xvii. 2. *Them* (*'ōthâm*): this refers *ad sensum* to the nations symbolized by the horns. *Yaddōth*, inf. *piel* of *yâdâh*, to cast down, may be explained as referring to the power of the nations symbolized by the horns. *'Erets Y'hūdâh* (the land of Judah) stands for the inhabitants of the land. The four smiths, therefore, symbolize the instruments "of the divine omnipotence by which the imperial power in its several historical forms is overthrown" (Kliefoth), or, as Theod. Mops. expresses it, "the powers that serve God and inflict vengeance upon them from many directions." The vision does not show what powers God will use for this purpose. It is simply designed to show to the people of God, that every hostile power of the world which has risen up against it, or shall rise up, is to be judged and destroyed by the Lord.

THIRD VISION: THE MAN WITH THE MEASURING LINE.—CHAP. II. (HEB. CHAP. II. 5–17.)

Whilst the second vision sets forth the destruction of the powers that were hostile to Israel, the third (ch. ii. 1–5) with the prophetic explanation (vers. 6–13) shows the development of the people and kingdom of God till the time of its final glory. The vision itself appears very simple, only a few of the principal features being indicated; but in this very brevity it presents many difficulties so far as the exposition is concerned. It is as follows: Ver. 1. "*And I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and behold a man, and in his hand a measuring line.* Ver. 2. *Then*

I said, Whither goest thou? And he said to me, To measure Jerusalem, to see how great its breadth, and how great its length. Ver. 3. *And, behold, the angel that talked with me went out, and another angel went out to meet him.* Ver. 4. *And he said to him, Run, speak to this young man thus: Jerusalem shall lie as an open land for the multitude of men and cattle in the midst of it.* Ver. 5. *And I shall be to it, is the saying of Jehovah, a fiery wall round about; and I shall be for glory in the midst of it.*" The man with the measuring line in his hand is not the interpreting angel (C. B. Mich., Ros., Maurer, etc.); for it was not his duty to place the events upon the stage, but simply to explain to the prophet the things which he saw. Moreover, this angel is clearly distinguished from the man, inasmuch as he does not go out (ver. 3) till after the latter has gone to measure Jerusalem (ver. 2). At the same time, we cannot regard the measuring man as merely "a figure in the vision," since all the persons occurring in these visions are significant; but we agree with those who conjecture that he is the angel of Jehovah, although this conjecture cannot be distinctly proved. The task which he is preparing to perform —namely, to measure Jerusalem—leads unquestionably to the conclusion that he is something more than a figure. The measuring of the breadth and length of Jerusalem presupposes that the city is already in existence; and this expression must not be identified with the phrase, to draw the measure over Jerusalem, in ch. i. 16. Drawing the measure over a place is done for the purpose of sketching a plan for its general arrangement, or the rebuilding of it. But the length and breadth of a city can only be measured when it is already in existence; and the object of the measuring is not to see how long and how broad it is to be, but what the length and breadth actually are. It is true that it by no means follows from this that the city to be measured was the Jerusalem of that time; on the contrary, the vision shows the future Jerusalem, but it exhibits it as a city in actual existence, and visible to the spiritual eye. While the man goes away to measure the city, the interpreting angel goes out: not out of the myrtle thicket, for this only occurs in the first vision; but he goes away from the presence of the prophet, where we have to think of him as his interpreter, in the direction of the man

with the measuring line, to find out what he is going to do, and bring back word to the prophet. At the very same time another angel comes out to meet *him*, viz. the *angelus interpres*, not the man with the measuring line. For one person can only come to meet another when the latter is going in the direction from which the former comes. Having come to meet him, he (the second angel) says to him (the *angelus interpres*), "Run, say to this young man," etc. The subject to וַיֹּאמֶר can only be the second angel; for if, on grammatical grounds, the *angelus interpres* might be regarded as speaking to the young man, such an assumption is proved to be untenable, by the fact that it was no part of the office of the *angelus interpres* to give orders or commissions to another angel. On the other hand, there is nothing at all to preclude another angel from revealing a decree of God to the *angelus interpres* for him to communicate to the prophet; inasmuch as this does not bring the *angelus interpres* into action any further than his function requires, so that there is no ground for the objection that this is at variance with his standing elsewhere (Kliefoth). But the other angel could not give the instructions mentioned in ver. 4 to the *angelus interpres*, unless he were either himself a superior angel, viz. the angel of Jehovah, or had been directed to do so by the man with the measuring line, in which case this "man" would be the angel of Jehovah. Of these two possibilities we prefer the latter on two grounds: (1) because it is impossible to think of any reason why the "other angel" should not be simply called מַלְאַךְ יְהוָה, if he really were the angel of the Lord; and (2) because, according to the analogy of Ezek. xl. 3, the man with the measuring line most probably was the angel of Jehovah, with whose dignity it would be quite in keeping that he should explain his purpose to the *angelus interpres* through the medium of another (inferior) angel. And if this be established, so far as the brevity of the account will allow, we cannot understand by the "young man" the man with the measuring line, as Hitzig, Maurer, and Kliefoth do. The only way in which such an assumption as this could be rendered tenable or in harmony with the rest, would be by supposing that the design of the message was to tell the man with the measuring line that "he might desist from his useless enterprise" (Hitzig), as Jerusalem could not be measured at all, on account of the

number of its inhabitants and its vast size (Theod. Mops., Theodoret, Ewald, Umbreit, etc.); but Kliefoth has very justly replied to this, that "if a city be ever so great, inasmuch as it is a city, it can always be measured, and also have walls." If, then, the symbolical act of measuring, as Kliefoth also admits, expresses the question how large and how broad Jerusalem will eventually be, and if the words of vers. 4, 5 contain the answer to this question, viz. Jerusalem will in the first place (ver. 4) contain such a multitude of men and cattle that it will dwell like *p'râzōth;* this answer, which gives the meaning of the measuring, must be addressed not to the measuring man, but simply to the prophet, that he may announce to the people the future magnitude and glory of the city. The measuring man was able to satisfy himself of this by the measuring itself. We must therefore follow the majority of both the earlier and later expositors, and take the "young man" as being the prophet himself, who is so designated on account of his youthful age, and without any allusion whatever to "human inexperience and dim short-sightedness" (Hengstenberg), since such an allusion would be very remote from the context, and even old men of experience could not possibly know anything concerning the future glory of Jerusalem without a revelation from above. *Hallâz*, as in Judg. vi. 20 and 2 Kings iv. 25, is a contraction of *hallâzeh*, and formed from *lâzeh*, there, thither, and the article *hal*, in the sense of the (young man) there, or that young man (cf. Ewald, § 103, *a*, and 183, *b*; Ges. § 34, Anm. 1). He is to make haste and bring this message, because it is good news, the realization of which will soon commence. The message contains a double and most joyful promise. (1) Jerusalem will in future dwell, *i.e.* be built, as *p'râzōth*. This word means neither "without walls," nor *loca aperta*, but strictly speaking the *plains*, and is only used in the plural to denote the open, level ground, as contrasted with the fortified cities surrounded by walls: thus *'ārē p'râzōth*, cities of the plain, in Esth. ix. 19, as distinguished from the capital Susa; and *'erets p'râzōth* in Ezek. xxxviii. 11, the land where men dwell "without walls, bolts, and gates;" hence *p'râzī*, inhabitant of the plain, in contrast with the inhabitants of fortified cities with high walls (Deut. iii. 5; 1 Sam. vi. 18). The thought is therefore the following:

Jerusalem is in future to resemble an open country covered with unwalled cities and villages; it will no longer be a city closely encircled with walls; hence it will be extraordinarily enlarged, on account of the multitude of men and cattle with which it will be blessed (cf. Isa. xlix. 19, 20; Ezek. xxxviii. 11) Moreover, (2) Jerusalem will then have no protecting wall surrounding it, because it will enjoy a superior protection. Jehovah will be to it a wall of fire round about, that is to say, a defence of fire which will consume every one who ventures to attack it (cf. Isa. iv. 5; Deut. iv. 24). Jehovah will also be the glory in the midst of Jerusalem, that is to say, will fill the city with His glory (cf. Isa. lx. 19). This promise is explained in the following prophetic words which are uttered by the angel of Jehovah, as vers. 8, 9, and 11 clearly show. According to these verses, for example, the speaker is sent by Jehovah, and according to ver. 8 to the nations which have plundered Israel, "after glory," *i.e.* to smite these nations and make them servants to the Israelites. From this shall Israel learn that Jehovah has sent him. The fact that, according to vers. 3, 4, another angel speaks to the prophet, may be easily reconciled with this. For since this angel, as we have seen above, was sent by the angel of Jehovah, he speaks according to his instructions, and that in such a manner that his words pass imperceptibly into the words of the sender, just as we very frequently find the words of a prophet passing suddenly into the words of God, and carried on as such. For the purpose of escaping from this simple conclusion, Koehler has forcibly broken up this continuous address, and has separated the words of vers. 8, 9, and 11, in which the angel says that Jehovah has sent him, from the words of Jehovah proclaimed by the angel, as being interpolations, but without succeeding in explaining them either simply or naturally.

The prophecy commences thus in vers. 6–9: Ver. 6. "*Ho, ho, flee out of the land of the north, is the saying of Jehovah; for I spread you out as the four winds of heaven, is the saying of Jehovah.* Ver. 7. *Ho, Zion, save thyself, thou that dwellest with the daughter Babel.* Ver. 8. *For thus saith Jehovah of hosts, After glory hath he sent me to the nations that have plundered you; for whoever toucheth you, toucheth the apple of His eye.* Ver. 9. *For, behold, I swing my hand over them, and they*

become a spoil to those who served them; and ye will see that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me." The summons to flee out of Babylon, in vers. 6 and 7, is addressed to the Israelites, who are all included in the one name Zion in ver. 7; and shows that the address which follows is not a simple continuation of the promise in vers. 4 and 5, but is intended both to explain it, and to assign the reason for it. The summons contains so far a reason for it, that the Israelites are directed to flee out of Babylon, because the judgment is about to burst upon this oppressor of the people of God. The words *nūsū*, flee, and *himmâl'tī*, save thyself or escape, both point to the judgment, and in ver. 9 the judgment itself is clearly spoken of. The land of the north is Babylon (cf. Jer. i. 14, vi. 22, x. 22; and for the fact itself, Isa. xlviii. 20). The reason for the exclamation "Flee" is first of all given in the clause, "for like the four winds have I spread you out," not "dispersed you" (Vulg., C. B. Mich., Koehler). For apart from the fact that *pērēs* almost always means to spread out, and has the meaning to disperse at the most in Ps. lxviii. 15 and Ezek. xvii. 21, this meaning is altogether unsuitable here. For if Israel had been scattered like the four winds, it would of necessity have been summoned to return, not only from the north, but from all quarters of the globe (Hitzig, Kliefoth). Moreover, we should then have לְאַרְבַּע, *into* the four winds; and the method suggested by Koehler for reconciling בְּאַרְבַּע with his view, viz. by assuming that "like the four winds" is equivalent to "as chaff is pounded and driven away from its place by the four winds," according to which the winds would be mentioned in the place of the chaff, will hardly meet with approval. The explanation is rather that the perfect *pērastī* is used prophetically to denote the purpose of God, which had already been formed, even if its realization was still in the future. To spread out like the four winds is the same as to spread out just as the four winds spread out to all quarters of the globe. Because God has resolved upon spreading out His people in this manner, they are to flee out of Babel, that they may not suffer the fate of Babel. That this thought lies at the foundation of the motive assigned, is evident from the further reasons assigned for the summons in vers. 8 and 9. *Zion* stands for the inhabitants of Zion, namely the people of God, who are for the time being still

yōshebheth bath Bâbel, dwelling with the daughter Babel. As *Zion* does not mean the city or fortress of Jerusalem, but the inhabitants, so the "daughter Babel" is not the city of Babylon or country of Babylonia personified, but the inhabitants of Babel; and יָשַׁב is construed with the *accusative* of the person, as in Ps. xxii. 4 and 2 Sam. vi. 2. What Jehovah states in explanation of the twofold call to flee out of Babel, does not commence with ver. 9 (Ewald), or with כִּי הַנֹּגֵעַ in ver. 8*b* (Koehler), but with אַחַר כָּבוֹד וגו׳. The incorrectness of the two former explanations is seen first of all in the fact that כִּי only introduces a speech in the same manner as ὅτι, when it follows directly upon the introductory formula; but not, as is here assumed, when a long parenthesis is inserted between, without the introduction being resumed by לֵאמֹר. And secondly, neither of these explanations furnishes a suitable meaning. If the words of God only followed in ver. 9, עֲלֵיהֶם in the first clause would be left without any noun to which to refer; and if they commenced with כִּי הַנֹּגֵעַ (for he that toucheth), the thought "he that toucheth you," etc., would assign no reason for the call to flee and save themselves. For if Israel is defended or valued by God as a pupil of the eye, there can be no necessity for it to flee. And lastly, it is impossible to see what can be the meaning or object of the parenthesis, "After glory hath He sent me," etc. If it treated "of the execution of the threat of punishment upon the heathen" (Koehler), it would be inserted in an unsuitable place, since the threat of punishment would not follow till afterwards. All these difficulties vanish if Jehovah's words commence with *'achar kâbhōd* (after glory), in which case *shᵉlâchanī* (He hath sent me) may be very simply explained from the fact that the address is introduced, not in a direct form, but indirectly: Jehovah says, He has sent me after glory. The sender is Jehovah, and the person sent is not the prophet, but the angel of the Lord. *Achar kâbhōd:* behind glory, after glory; not however "after the glory of success" (Hitzig, Ewald, etc.), still less "with a glorious commission," but to get glory upon the heathen, *i.e.* to display the glory of God upon the heathen through the judgment by which their power is broken, and the heathen world is made to serve the people of God. The manner in which the next two clauses, commencing with *kī* (for), are attached, is the following: The

first assigns the subjective motive; that is to say, states the reason why God has sent him to the heathen, namely, because they have plundered His people, and have thereby touched the apple of His eye. בָּבַת עַיִן, the apple of the eye (*lit.* the gate, the opening in which the eye is placed, or more probably the pupil of the eye, *pupilla*, as being the object most carefully preserved), is a figure used to denote the dearest possession or good, and in this sense is applied to the nation of Israel as early as Deut. xxxii. 10. The second explanatory clause in ver. 9 adds the practical ground for this sending after glory. The speaker is still the angel of the Lord; and his acting is identical with the acting of God. Like Jehovah, he swings his hand over the heathen nations which plundered Israel (cf. Isa. xi. 15, xix. 16), and they become (וְהָיוּ expressing the consequence), *i.e.* so that they become, booty to the Israelites, who had previously been obliged to serve them (cf. Isa. xiv. 2). In what way the heathen would serve Israel is stated in ver. 11. By the execution of this judgment Israel would learn that Jehovah had sent His angel, namely to execute upon the heathen His saving purposes for Israel. This is the meaning of these words, not only here and in ver. 11, but also in ch. iv. 9 and vi. 15, where this formula is repeated, not however in the sense imagined by Koehler, namely that he had spoken these words in consequence of a command from Jehovah, and not of his own accord, by which the "sending" is changed into "speaking."

Vers. 10–13. The daughter Zion is to rejoice at this sending of the angel of the Lord. Ver. 10. "*Exult and rejoice, O daughter Zion: for, behold, I come, and dwell in the midst of thee, is the saying of Jehovah.* Ver. 11. *And many nations will attach themselves to Jehovah in that day, and become a people to me: and I dwell in the midst of thee; and thou wilt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me to thee.*" The daughter Zion, or the church of the Lord, delivered out of Babel, is to rejoice with joy, because her glorification is commencing now. The Lord comes to her in His angel, in whom are His name (Ex. xxiii. 21) and His face (Ex. xxxiii. 14), *i.e.* the angel of His face (Isa. lxiii. 9), who reveals His nature, to dwell in the midst of her. This dwelling of Jehovah, or of His angel, in the midst of Zion, is essentially different from the dwelling of Jehovah in the Most

Holy Place of His temple. It commences with the coming of the Son of God in the flesh, and is completed by His return in glory (John i. 14 and Rev. xxi. 3). Then will many, or powerful, nations, attach themselves to Jehovah, and become His people (cf. ch. viii. 20, 21; Isa. xiv. 1). This kingdom of God, which has hitherto been restricted to Israel, will be spread out and glorified by the reception of the heathen nations which are seeking God (Mic. iv. 2). The repetition of the expression, "I dwell in the midst of thee," merely serves as a stronger asseveration of this brilliant promise; and the same remark applies to the repetition of וְיָדַעְתָּ וגו׳ (and thou shalt know): see at ver. 13. Jerusalem will thereby receive the expansion shown to the prophet in ver. 4; and through the dwelling of God in the midst of her, the promise in ver. 5 will also be fulfilled. The next verse refers to this.

Ver. 12. "*And Jehovah will take possession of Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will yet choose Jerusalem.* Ver. 13. *Be still, all flesh, before Jehovah; for He has risen up out of His holy habitation.*" The first hemistich of ver. 12 rests upon Deut. xxxii. 9, where Israel, as the chosen nation, is called the *chĕleq* and *nachălâh* of Jehovah. This appointment of Israel to be the possession of Jehovah will become perfect truth and reality in the future, through the coming of the Lord. *Y^ehūdâh* is Judah as delivered, *i.e.* the remnant of the whole of the covenant nation. This remnant, after being gathered out of Babel, will dwell upon holy ground, or in a holy land, as the possession of the Lord. The holy land is the land of Jehovah (Hos. ix. 3); but this is not to be set down without reserve as identical with Palestine. On the contrary, every place where Jehovah may be is holy ground (cf. Ex. iii. 5); so that even Palestine is only holy when the Lord dwells there. And we must not limit the idea of the holy land in this passage to Palestine, because the idea of the people of God will be so expanded by the addition of many nations, that it will not have room enough within the limits of Palestine; and according to ver. 4, even Jerusalem will no longer be a city with limited boundaries. The holy land reaches just as far as the nations, which have become the people of Jehovah by attaching themselves to Judah, spread themselves out over the surface of the earth. The words "choose Jerusalem again" round off the promise, just as in ch. i. 17;

but in ver. 13 the admonition is added, to wait in reverential silence for the coming of the Lord to judgment, after Hab. ii. 20; and the reason assigned is, that the judgment will soon begin. נֵעוֹר, *niphal* of עוּר (compare Ewald, § 140, *a*; Ges. § 72, Anm. 9), to wake up, or rise up from His rest (cf. Ps. xliv. 24). מְעוֹן קָדְשׁוֹ, the holy habitation of God, is heaven, as in Deut. xxvi. 15, Jer. xxv. 30. The judgment upon the heathen world-power began to burst in a very short time. When Babylon revolted against the king of Persia, under the reign of Darius, a great massacre took place within the city after its re-capture, and its walls were destroyed, so that the city could not rise again to its ancient grandeur and importance. Compare with this the remark made in the comm. on Haggai (p. 196), concerning the overthrow of the Persian empire and those which followed it. We have already shown, at p. 107, note, what a groundless hypothesis the opinion is, that the fulfilment was interrupted in consequence of Israel's guilt; and that as the result of this, the completion of it has been deferred for centuries, or even thousands of years.

THE FOURTH VISION: THE HIGH PRIEST JOSHUA IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ANGEL OF THE LORD.—CHAP. III.

In this and the following visions the prophet is shown the future glorification of the church of the Lord. Ver. 1. "*And he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of Jehovah, and Satan stood at his right hand to oppose him.* Ver. 2. *And Jehovah said to Satan, Jehovah rebuke thee, O Satan; and Jehovah who chooseth Jerusalem rebuke thee. Is not this a brand saved out of the fire?* Ver. 3. *And Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.* Ver. 4. *And he answered and spake to those who stood before him thus: Take away the filthy garments from him. And he said to him, Behold, I have taken away thy guilt from thee, and clothe thee in festal raiment.* Ver. 5. *And I said, Let them put a clean mitre upon his head. Then they put the clean mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of Jehovah stood by.*" The subject to וַיַּרְאֵנִי is Jehovah, and not the mediating angel, for his work was to explain the visions to the prophet, and not to introduce them; nor the angel of Jehovah, because he

appears in the course of the vision, although in these visions he is sometimes identified with Jehovah, and sometimes distinguished from Him. The scene is the following: Joshua stands as high priest before the angel of the Lord, and Satan stands at his (Joshua's) right hand as accuser. Satan (*hassâtân*) is the evil spirit so well known from the book of Job, and the constant accuser of men before God (Rev. xii. 10), and not Sanballat and his comrades (Kimchi, Drus., Ewald). He comes forward here as the enemy and accuser of Joshua, to accuse him in his capacity of high priest. The scene is therefore a judicial one, and the high priest is not in the sanctuary, the building of which had commenced, or engaged in supplicating the mercy of the angel of the Lord for himself and the people, as Theodoret and Hengstenberg suppose. The expression עֹמֵד לִפְנֵי furnishes no tenable proof of this, since it cannot be shown that this expression would be an inappropriate one to denote the standing of an accused person before the judge, or that the Hebrew language had any other expression for this. Satan stands on the right side of Joshua, because the accuser was accustomed to stand at the right hand of the accused (cf. Ps. cix. 6). Joshua is opposed by Satan, however, not on account of any personal offences either in his private or his domestic life, but in his official capacity as high priest, and for sins which were connected with his office, or for offences which would involve the nation (Lev. iv. 3); though not as the bearer of the sins of the people before the Lord, but as laden with his own and his people's sins. The dirty clothes, which he had on, point to this (ver. 3). But Jehovah, *i.e.* the angel of Jehovah, repels the accuser with the words, "Jehovah rebuke thee; ... Jehovah who chooseth Jerusalem."[1] The words are repeated for the sake of emphasis, and with the repetition the motive which led Jehovah to reject the accuser

[1] The application made in the Epistle of Jude (ver. 9) of the formula "Jehovah rebuke thee," namely, that Michael the archangel did not venture to execute upon Satan the κρίσις βλασφημίας, does not warrant the conclusion that the angel of the Lord places himself below Jehovah by these words. The words "Jehovah rebuke thee" are a standing formula for the utterance of the threat of a divine judgment, from which no conclusion can be drawn as to the relation in which the person using it stood to God. Moreover, Jude had not our vision in his mind, but another event, which has not been preserved in the canonical Scriptures.

is added. Because Jehovah has chosen Jerusalem, and maintains His choice in its integrity (this is implied in the participle *bōchēr*). He must rebuke Satan, who hopes that his accusation will have the effect of repealing the choice of Jerusalem, by deposing the high priest. For if any sin of the high priest, which inculpated the nation, had been sufficient to secure his removal or deposition, the office of high priest would have ceased altogether, because no man is without sin. גָּעַר, to rebuke, does not mean merely to nonsuit, but to reprove for a thing; and when used of God, to reprove by action, signifying to sweep both him and his accusation entirely away. The motive for the repulse of the accuser is strengthened by the clause which follows: Is he (Joshua) not a brand plucked out of the fire? *i.e.* one who has narrowly escaped the threatening destruction (for the figure, see Amos iv. 11). These words, again, we must not take as referring to the high priest as an individual; nor must we restrict their meaning to the fact that Joshua had been brought back from captivity, and reinstated in the office of high priest. Just as the accusation does not apply to the individual, but to the office which Joshua filled, so do these words also apply to the supporter of the official dignity. The fire, out of which Joshua had been rescued as a brand, was neither the evil which had come upon Joshua through neglecting the building of the temple (Koehler), nor the guilt of allowing his sons to marry foreign wives (Targ., Jerome, Rashi, Kimchi): for in the former case the accusation would have come too late, since the building of the temple had been resumed five months before (Hag. i. 15, compared with Zech. i. 7); and in the latter it would have been much too early, since these misalliances did not take place till fifty years afterwards. And, in general, guilt which might possibly lead to ruin could not be called a fire; still less could the cessation or removal of this sin be called deliverance out of the fire. Fire is a figurative expression for punishment, not for sin. The fire out of which Joshua had been saved like a brand was the captivity, in which both Joshua and the nation had been brought to the verge of destruction. Out of this fire Joshua the high priest had been rescued. But, as Kliefoth has aptly observed, "the priesthood of Israel was concentrated in the high priest, just as the character of Israel as the holy nation

was concentrated in the priesthood. The high priest represented the holiness and priestliness of Israel, and that not merely in certain official acts and functions, but so that as a particular Levite and Aaronite, and as the head for the time being of the house of Aaron, he represented in his own person that character of holiness and priestliness which had been graciously bestowed by God upon the nation of Israel." This serves to explain how the hope that God must rebuke the accuser could be made to rest upon the election of Jerusalem, *i.e.* upon the love of the Lord to the whole of His nation. The pardon and the promise do not apply to Joshua personally any more than the accusation; but they refer to him in his official position, and to the whole nation, and that with regard to the special attributes set forth in the high priesthood—namely, its priestliness and holiness. We cannot, therefore, find any better words with which to explain the meaning of this vision than those of Kliefoth. "The character of Israel," he says, "as the holy and priestly nation of God, was violated —violated by the general sin and guilt of the nation, which God had been obliged to punish with exile. This guilt of the nation, which neutralized the priestliness and holiness of Israel, is pleaded by Satan in the accusation which he brings before the *Maleach* of Jehovah against the high priest, who was its representative. A nation so guilty and so punished could no longer be the holy and priestly nation: its priests could no longer be priests; nor could its high priests be high priests any more. But the *Maleach* of Jehovah sweeps away the accusation with the assurance that Jehovah, from His grace, and for the sake of its election, will still give validity to Israel's priesthood, and has already practically manifested this purpose of His by bringing it out of its penal condition of exile."

After the repulse of the accuser, Joshua is cleansed from the guilt attaching to him. When he stood before the angel of the Lord he had dirty clothes on. The dirty clothes are not the costume of an accused person (Drus., Ewald); for this Roman custom (Lev. ii. 54, vi. 20) was unknown to the Hebrews. Dirt is a figurative representation of sin; so that dirty clothes represent defilement with sin and guilt (cf. Isa. lxiv. 5, iv. 4; Prov. xxx. 12; Rev. iii. 4, vii. 14). The Lord had indeed refined His nation in its exile, and in His grace had

preserved it from destruction; but its sin was not thereby wiped away. The place of grosser idolatry had been taken by the more refined idolatry of self-righteousness, selfishness, and conformity to the world. And the representative of the nation before the Lord was affected with the dirt of these sins, which gave Satan a handle for his accusation. But the Lord would cleanse His chosen people from this, and make it a holy and glorious nation. This is symbolized by what takes place in vers. 4 and 5. The angel of the Lord commands those who stand before Him, *i.e.* the angels who serve Him, to take off the dirty clothes from the high priest, and put on festal clothing; and then adds, by way of explanation to Joshua, Behold, I have caused thy guilt to pass away from thee, that is to say, I have forgiven thy sin, and justified thee (cf. 2 Sam. xii. 13, xxiv. 10), and clothe thee with festal raiment. The inf. abs. *halbēsh* stands, as it frequently does, for the finite verb, and has its norm in הַעֲבַרְתִּי (see at Hag. i. 6). The last words are either spoken to the attendant angels as well, or else, what is more likely, they are simply passed over in the command given to them, and mentioned for the first time here. *Machălâtsōth*, costly clothes, which were only worn on festal occasions (see at Isa. iii. 22). They are not symbols of innocence and righteousness (Chald.), which are symbolized by clean or white raiment (Rev. iii. 4, vii. 9); nor are they figurative representations of joy (Koehler), but are rather symbolical of glory. The high priest, and the nation in him, are not only to be cleansed from sin, and justified, but to be sanctified and glorified as well.—Ver. 5. At this moment the prophet feels compelled to utter the prayer that they may also put a clean mitre upon Joshua's head, which prayer is immediately granted. The prayer appears at first to be superfluous, inasmuch as the mitre would certainly not be forgotten when the dirty clothes were taken away and the festal dress was put on. Nevertheless, the fact that it is granted shows that it was not superfluous. The meaning of the prayer was hardly that the high priest might be newly attired from head to foot, as Hengstenberg supposes, but is rather connected with the significance of the mitre. *Tsânīph* is not a turban, such as might be worn by anybody (Koehler), but the head-dress of princely persons and kings (Job xxix. 14; Isa. lxii. 3), and is synonymous with *mitsnepheth*, the technical word for the

tiara prescribed for the high priest in the law (Ex. and Lev.), as we may see from Ezek. xxi. 31, where the regal diadem, which is called *tsânîph* in Isa. lxii. 3, is spoken of under the name of *mitsnepheth*. The turban of the high priest was that portion of his dress in which he carried his office, so to speak, upon his forehead; and the clean turban was the substratum for the golden plate that was fastened upon it, and by which he was described as holy to the Lord, and called to bear the guilt of the children of Israel (Ex. xxviii. 38). The prayer for a clean mitre to be put upon his head, may therefore be accounted for from the wish that Joshua should not only be splendidly decorated, but should be shown to be holy, and qualified to accomplish the expiation of the people. Purity, as the earthly type of holiness, forms the foundation for glory. In the actual performance of the matter, therefore, the putting on of the clean mitre is mentioned first, and then the clothing with festal robes. This took place in the presence of the angel of the Lord. That is the meaning of the circumstantial clause, "and the angel of the Lord stood" (*ritum tanquam herus imperans, probans et præsentia sua ornans*, C. B. Mich.), and not merely that the angel of the Lord, who had hitherto been sitting in the judge's seat, rose up from his seat for the purpose of speaking while the robing was going on (Hofmann, Koehler). עָמַד does not mean to stand up, but simply to remain standing.

Vers. 6–10. In these verses there follows a prophetic address, in which the angel of the Lord describes the symbolical action of the re-clothing of the high priest, according to its typical significance in relation to the continuance and the future of the kingdom of God. Ver. 6. "*And the angel of the Lord testified to Joshua, and said,* Ver. 7. *Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, If thou shalt walk in my ways, and keep my charge; thou shalt both judge my house and keep my courts, and I will give thee ways among these standing here.* Ver. 8. *Hear then, thou high priest Joshua, thou, and thy comrades who sit before thee: yea, men of wonder are they: for, behold, I bring my servant Zemach* (*Sprout*). Ver. 9. *For behold the stone which I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone are seven eyes: behold I engrave its carving, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, and I clear away the iniquity of this land in one day.* Ver. 10. *In that*

day, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, ye will invite one another under the vine and under the fig-tree." In ver. 7 not only is the high priest confirmed in his office, but the perpetuation and glorification of his official labours are promised. As Joshua appears in this vision as the supporter of the office, this promise does not apply to Joshua himself so much as to the office, the continuance of which is indeed bound up with the fidelity of those who sustain it. The promise in ver. 7 therefore begins by giving prominence to this condition: If thou wilt walk in my ways, etc. Walking in the ways of the Lord refers to the personal attitude of the priests towards the Lord, or to fidelity in their personal relation to God; and keeping the charge of Jehovah, to the faithful performance of their official duties (*shâmar mishmartī*, noticing what has to be observed in relation to Jehovah; see at Lev. viii. 35). The apodosis begins with וְגַם אַתָּה, and not with וְנָתַתִּי. This is required not only by the emphatic *'attâh*, but also by the clauses commencing with *v'gam;* whereas the circumstance, that the tense only changes with *v'nâthattī*, and that *tâdīn* and *tishmōr* are still imperfects, has its simple explanation in the fact, that on account of the *gam*, the verbs could not be linked together with *Vav*, and placed at the head of the clauses. Taken by themselves, the clauses *v'gam tâdīn* and *v'gam tishmōr* might express a duty of the high priest quite as well as a privilege. If they were taken as apodoses, they would express an obligation; but in that case they would appear somewhat superfluous, because the obligations of the high priest are fully explained in the two previous clauses. If, on the other hand, the apodosis commences with them, they contain, in the form of a promise, a privilege which is set before the high priest as awaiting him in the future—namely, the privilege of still further attending to the service of the house of God, which had been called in question by Satan's accusation. דִּין אֶת־בֵּיתִי, to judge the house of God, *i.e.* to administer right in relation to the house of God, namely, in relation to the duties devolving upon the high priest in the sanctuary as such; hence the right administration of the service in the holy place and the holy of holies. This limitation is obvious from the parallel clause, to keep the courts, in which the care of the ordinary performance of worship in the courts, and the keeping of everything of an idolatrous nature

from the house of God, are transferred to him. And to this a new and important promise is added in the last clause (וְנָתַתִּי וגו׳). The meaning of this depends upon the explanation given to the word מַהֲלְכִים. Many commentators regard this as a Chaldaic form of the *hiphil* participle (after Dan. iii. 25, iv. 34), and take it either in the intransitive sense of "those walking" (LXX., Pesh., Vulg., Luth., Hofm., etc.), or in the transitive sense of those conducting the leaders (Ges., Hengst., etc.). But apart from the fact that the *hiphil* of הָלַךְ in Hebrew is always written either הוֹלִיךְ or הֵילִיךְ, and has never anything but a transitive meaning, this view is precluded by the בֵּין, for which we should expect מִבֵּין or מִן, since the meaning could only be, "I give thee walkers or leaders between those standing here," *i.e.* such as walk to and fro between those standing here (Hofmann), or, "I will give thee leaders among (from) these angels who are standing here" (Hengstenberg). In the former case, the high priest would receive a promise that he should always have angels to go to and fro between himself and Jehovah, to carry up his prayers, and bring down revelations from God, and supplies of help (John i. 52; Hofmann). This thought would be quite a suitable one; but it is not contained in the words, "since the angels, even if they walk between the standing angels and in the midst of them, do not go to and fro between Jehovah and Joshua" (Kliefoth). In the latter case the high priest would merely receive a general assurance of the assistance of superior angels; and for such a thought as this the expression would be an extremely marvellous one, and the בֵּין would be used incorrectly. We must therefore follow Calvin and others, who take מַהֲלְכִים as a substantive, from a singular מַהֲלָךְ, formed after מַחְצֵב, מַסְמֵר, מַזְלֵג, or else as a plural of מַהֲלָךְ, to be pointed מַהֲלָכִים (Ros., Hitzig, Kliefoth). The words then add to the promise, which ensured to the people the continuance of the priesthood and of the blessings which it conveyed, this new feature, that the high priest would also receive a free access to God, which had not yet been conferred upon him by his office. This points to a time when the restrictions of the Old Testament will be swept away. The further address, in vers. 8 and 9, announces how God will bring about this new time or future. To show the importance of what follows, Joshua is called upon to "hear." It is doubtful where what

he is to hear commences; for the idea, that after the summons to attend, the successive, chain-like explanation of the reason for this summons passes imperceptibly into that to which he is to give heed, is hardly admissible, and has only been adopted because it was found difficult to discover the true commencement of the address. The earlier theologians (Chald., Jerome, Theod. Mops., Theodoret, and Calvin), and even Hitzig and Ewald, take כִּי הִנְנִי מֵבִיא (for behold I will bring forth). But these words are evidently explanatory of אַנְשֵׁי מוֹפֵת הֵמָּה (men of wonder, etc.). Nor can it commence with *ūmashtī* (and I remove), as Hofmann supposes (*Weiss. u. Erfüll.* i. 339), or with ver. 9, "for behold the stone," as he also maintains in his *Schriftbeweis* (ii. 1, pp. 292–3, 508–9). The first of these is precluded not only by the fact that the address would be cut far too short, but also by the cop. *Vav* before *mashtī;* and the second by the fact that the words, "for behold the stone," etc., in ver. 9, are unmistakeably a continuation and further explanation of the words, "for behold I will bring forth my servant Zemach," in ver. 8. The address begins with "thou and thy fellows," since the priests could not be called upon to hear, inasmuch as they were not present. Joshua's comrades who sit before him are the priests who sat in the priestly meetings in front of the high priest, the president of the assembly, so that *yōshēbh liphnē* corresponds to our "assessors." The following *kī* introduces the substance of the address; and when the subject is placed at the head absolutely, it is used in the sense of an asseveration, "yea, truly" (cf. Gen. xviii. 20; Ps. cxviii. 10–12, cxxviii. 2; and Ewald, § 330, *b*). *'Anshē mōphēth*, men of miracle, or of a miraculous sign, as *mōphēth*, τὸ τέρας, *portentum, miraculum*, embraces the idea of אוֹת, σημεῖον (cf. Isa. viii. 18), are men who attract attention to themselves by something striking, and are types of what is to come, so that *mōphēth* really corresponds to τύπος τῶν μελλόντων (see at Ex. iv. 21, Isa. viii. 18). הֵמָּה stands for אַתֶּם, the words passing over from the second person to the third on the resuming of the subject, which is placed at the head absolutely, just as in Zeph. ii. 12, and refers not only to רֵעֶיךָ, but to Joshua and his comrades. They are men of typical sign, but not simply on account of the office which they hold, viz. because their mediatorial priesthood points to the mediatorial office and atoning work of the Messiah, as most

of the commentators assume. For "this applies, in the first place, not only to Joshua and his priests, but to the Old Testament priesthood generally; and secondly, there was nothing miraculous in this mediatorial work of the priesthood, which must have been the case if they were to be *mōphēth*. The miracle, which is to be seen in Joshua and his priests, consists rather in the fact that the priesthood of Israel is laden with guilt, but by the grace of God it has been absolved, and accepted by God again, as the deliverance from exile shows," and Joshua and his priests are therefore brands plucked by the omnipotence of grace from the fire of merited judgment (Kliefoth). This miracle of grace which has been wrought for them, points beyond itself to an incomparably greater and better act of the sin-absolving grace of God, which is still in the future. This is the way in which the next clause, "for I bring my servant Zemach," which is explanatory of *'anshē mōphēth* (men of miracle), attaches itself. The word *Tsemach* is used by Zechariah simply as a proper name of the Messiah; and the combination *'abhdī Tsemach* (my servant Tsemach) is precisely the same as *'abhdī Dâvid* (my servant David) in Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24, xxxvii. 24, or "my servant Job" in Job i. 8, ii. 3, etc. The objection raised by Koehler—namely, that if *tsemach*, as a more precise definition of *'abhdī* (my servant), or as an announcement what servant of Jehovah is intended, were used as a proper name, it would either be construed with the article (הַצֶּמַח), or else we should have עַבְדִּי צֶמַח שְׁמוֹ as in ch. vi. 12—is quite groundless. For "if poets or prophets form new proper names at pleasure, such names, even when deprived of the article, easily assume the distinguishing sign of most proper names, like *bâgōdâh* and *m'shūbhâh* in Jer. iii." (Ewald, § 277, *c.*) It is different with שְׁמוֹ in ch. vi. 12; there *sh'mō* is needed for the sake of the sense, as in 1 Sam. i. 1 and Job i. 1, and does not serve to designate the preceding word as a proper name, but simply to define the person spoken of more precisely by mentioning his name. Zechariah has formed the name *Tsemach*, Sprout, or Shoot, primarily from Jer. xxiii. 5 and xxxiii. 15, where the promise is given that a righteous Sprout (*tsemach tsaddīq*), or a Sprout of righteousness, shall be raised up to Jacob. And Jeremiah took the figurative description of the great descendant of David, who will create righteousness upon the earth, as

a *tsemach* which Jehovah will raise up, or cause to shoot up to David, from Isa. xi. 1, 2, liii. 2, according to which the Messiah is to spring up as a rod out of the stem of Jesse that has been hewn down, or as a root-shoot out of dry ground. *Tsemach*, therefore, denotes the Messiah in His origin from the family of David that has fallen into humiliation, as a sprout which will grow up from its original state of humiliation to exaltation and glory, and answers therefore to the train of thought in this passage, in which the deeply humiliated priesthood is exalted by the grace of the Lord into a type of the Messiah. Whether the designation of the *sprout* as "my servant" is taken from Isa. lii. 13 and liii. 11 (cf. xlii. 1, xlix. 3), or formed after "my servant David" in Ezek. xxxiv. 24, xxxvii. 24, is a point which cannot be decided, and is of no importance to the matter in hand. The circumstance that the removal of iniquity, which is the peculiar work of the Messiah, is mentioned in ver. 9*b*, furnishes no satisfactory reason for deducing *'abhdī tsemach* pre-eminently from Isa. liii. For in ver. 9 the removal of iniquity is only mentioned in the second rank, in the explanation of Jehovah's purpose to bring His servant *Tsemach*. The first rank is assigned to the stone, which Jehovah has laid before Joshua, etc. The answer to the question, what this stone signifies, or who is to be understood by it, depends upon the view we take of the words עֵינַיִם . . . עַל אֶבֶן. Most of the commentators admit that these words do not form a parenthesis (Hitzig, Ewald), but introduce a statement concerning הִנֵּה הָאֶבֶן. Accordingly, הִנֵּה הָאֶבֶן וגו׳ is placed at the head absolutely, and resumed in עַל אֶבֶן אַחַת. This statement may mean, either upon one stone are seven eyes (visible or to be found), or seven eyes are directed upon one stone. For although, in the latter case, we should expect אֶל instead of עַל (according to Ps. xxxiii. 18, xxxiv. 16), שִׂים עַיִן עַל does occur in the sense of the exercise of loving care (Gen. xliv. 21; Jer. xxxix. 12, xl. 4). But if the seven eyes were to be seen upon the stone, they could only be engraved or drawn upon it. And what follows, הִנֵּנִי מְפַתֵּחַ וגו׳, does not agree with this, inasmuch as, according to this, the engraving upon the stone had now first to take place instead of having been done already, since *hinnēh* followed by a participle never expresses what has already occurred, but always what is to take place in the future. For this reason we must

decide that the seven eyes are directed towards the stone, or watch over it with protecting care. But this overthrows the view held by the expositors of the early church, and defended by Kliefoth, namely, that the stone signifies the Messiah, after Isa. xxviii. 16 and Ps. cxviii. 22,—a view with which the expression *nâthattī*, "given, laid before Joshua," can hardly be reconciled, even if this meant that Joshua was to see with his own eyes, as something actually present, that God was laying the foundation-stone. Still less can we think of the foundation-stone of the temple (Ros., Hitz.), since this had been laid long ago, and we cannot see for what purpose it was to be engraved; or of the stone which, according to the Rabbins, occupied the empty place of the ark of the covenant in the most holy place of the second temple (Hofmann); or of a precious stone in the breastplate of the high priest. The stone is the symbol of the kingdom of God, and is laid by Jehovah before Joshua, by God's transferring to him the regulation of His house and the keeping of His courts (before, *liphnē*, in a spiritual sense, as in 1 Kings ix. 6, for example). The seven eyes, which watch with protecting care over this stone, are not a figurative representation of the all-embracing providence of God; but, in harmony with the seven eyes of the Lamb, which are the seven Spirits of God (Rev. v. 6), and with the seven eyes of Jehovah (Zech. iv. 10), they are the sevenfold radiations of the Spirit of Jehovah (after Isa. xi. 2), which show themselves in vigorous action upon this stone, to prepare it for its destination. This preparation is called *pitlēăch pittuchâh* in harmony with the figure of the stone (cf. Ezek. xxviii. 9, 11). "I will engrave the engraving thereof," *i.e.* engrave it so as to prepare it for a beautiful and costly stone. The preparation of this stone, *i.e.* the preparation of the kingdom of God established in Israel, by the powers of the Spirit of the Lord, is one feature in which the bringing of the *tsemach* will show itself. The other consists in the wiping away of the iniquity of this land. *Mūsh* is used here in a transitive sense, to cause to depart, to wipe away. הָאָרֶץ הַהִוא (that land) is the land of Canaan or Judah, which will extend in the Messianic times over the whole earth. The definition of the time, *b'yōm 'echâd*, cannot of course mean "on one and the same day," so as to affirm that the communication of the true nature to Israel, namely, of one well pleasing to God, and

the removal of guilt from the land, would take place simultaneously (Hofmann, Koehler); but the expression "in one day" is substantially the same as ἐφάπαξ in Heb. vii. 27, ix. 12, x. 10, and affirms that the wiping away of sin to be effected by the Messiah (*tsemach*) will not resemble that effected by the typical priesthood, which had to be continually repeated, but will be all finished at once. This one day is the day of Golgotha. Accordingly, the thought of this verse is the following: Jehovah will cause His servant *Tsemach* to come, because He will prepare His kingdom gloriously, and exterminate all the sins of His people and land at once. By the wiping away of all guilt and iniquity, not only of that which rests upon the land (Koehler), but also of that of the inhabitants of the land, *i.e.* of the whole nation, all the discontent and all the misery which flow from sin will be swept away, and a state of blessed peace will ensue for the purified church of God. This is the thought of the tenth verse, which is formed after Mic. iv. 4 and 1 Kings v. 5, and with which the vision closes. The next vision shows the glory of the purified church.

THE FIFTH VISION: THE CANDLESTICK WITH THE TWO OLIVE TREES.—CHAP. IV.

Ver. 1. "*And the angel that talked with me returned and waked me, like a man who is waked out of his sleep.*" After the prophet has seen four visions one after another, probably with very short intervals, and has heard the marvellous interpretation of them, he is so overpowered by the impression produced by what he has seen and heard, that he falls into a state of spiritual exhaustion resembling sleep, just as Peter and his companions were unable to keep awake at the transfiguration of Christ (Luke ix. 32). He has not only fallen back into the state of ordinary human consciousness, but his ordinary spiritual consciousness was so depressed that he resembled a man asleep, and had to be waked out of this sleep-like state by the mediating angel, in order to be qualified for further seeing. It is evident from the expression וַיָּשָׁב (and he returned) that the *angelus interpres* had left the prophet after the termination of the previous visions, and now came back to him again. The fresh vision which presents itself to his spiritual

intuition, is described according to its principal features in vers. 2 and 3. Ver. 2. "*And he said to me, What seest thou? And I said, I see, and behold a candlestick all of gold, and its oil-vessel up above it, and its seven lamps upon it, seven pipes each for the lamps upon the top of it.* Ver. 3. *And two olive trees* (oil trees) *by it, one to the right of the oil-vessel, and one to the left of it.*" The second ויאמר (*chethib*) in ver. 2 might, if necessary, be explained in the way proposed by L. de Dieu, Gusset., and Hofmann, viz. by supposing that the mediating angel had no sooner asked the prophet what he saw, than he proceeded, without waiting for his answer, to give a description himself of what was seen. But this is at variance with the analogy of all the rest of the visions, where the visions seen by the prophet are always introduced with רָאִיתִי or וָאֵרְאֶה followed by וְהִנֵּה (cf. ch. i. 8, ii. 1, 5, v. 1, vi. 1), and it remains quite inflexible; so that we must accept the *kerî* וָאֹמַר, which is adopted by the early translators, and found in many codd., as being the true reading, and pronounce ויאמר a copyist's error. On the combination מְנוֹרַת זָהָב כֻּלָּהּ, in which the last two words are construed as a relative clause in subordination to *m'nōrath*, see Ewald, § 332, *c*. The visionary candlestick, all of gold, with its seven lamps, is unquestionably a figurative representation of the seven-branched golden candlestick in the tabernacle, and differs from this only in the three following additions which are peculiar to itself: (1) That it has its *gullâh* (גֻּלָּהּ for גֻּלָּתָהּ, with the feminine termination resolved; cf. Hos. xiii. 2, and Ewald, § 257, *d*), *i.e.* a can or round vessel for the oil, which was omitted altogether from the candlestick of the holy place, when the lamps were filled with oil by the priests, "at the top of it" (עַל־רֹאשָׁהּ); (2) That it had seven *mūtsâqōth* (pipes) each for the lamps, that is to say, tubes through which the oil poured from the *gullâh* into the lamps, or was conducted to them, whereas the candlestick of the tabernacle had no pipes, but only seven arms (*qânīm*), for the purpose of holding the lamps, which of course could not be wanting in the case of the visionary candlestick, and are merely omitted from the description as being self-evident. The number of the pipes is also a disputed point, viz. whether שִׁבְעָה וְשִׁבְעָה means seven and seven, *i.e.* fourteen, or whether it is to be taken distributively, seven each for the lamps, *i.e.* seven for each lamp, and therefore

forty-nine for the seven. The distributive view is disputed by Hitzig and Koehler as at variance with the usage of the language: the former proposing to alter the text, so as to obtain seven pipes, *i.e.* one for each lamp; and the latter, on the other hand, assuming that there were fourteen pipes, and inferring from the statement "seven and seven," instead of fourteen, that the second seven are to be sought in a different place from the first, that is to say, that the first seven led from the oil-vessel to the seven different lamps, whilst the second seven connected the seven lamps with one another, which would have been a very strange and perfectly useless provision. But there is no foundation whatever for the assertion that it is at variance with the usage of the language. For although a distributive relation is certainly expressed as a rule by the simple repetition of the number without any connecting *Vav*, such passages as 2 Sam. xxi. 20 and 1 Chron. xx. 6 show quite indisputably that the repetition of the same number with the *Vav cop.* between is also to be taken distributively. When, for example, it is stated in 2 Sam. xxi. 20, with regard to the hero of Gath, that the fingers of his hands and the fingers (toes) of his feet were "*shēsh vâshēsh*, four-and-twenty in number," it is evident that *shēsh vâshēsh* cannot mean "six and six," because six and six do not make twenty-four; and a division of the *shēsh* between the hands and feet is also untenable, because his two hands had not six fingers on them, but twelve, and so his two feet had not six toes on them, but twelve. Consequently *shēsh vâshēsh* must be taken distributively: the fingers of his (two) hands and the toes of his (two) feet were six each; for it is only $2+2\ (=4)\times 6$ that can give 24. This is shown still more clearly in 1 Chron. xx. 6: "and his fingers were *shēsh vâshēsh*, four-and-twenty." It is in this distributive sense, which is thus thoroughly established, so far as the usage of the language is concerned, that שִׁבְעָה וְשִׁבְעָה מוּצָ׳ is to be taken: seven pipes each for the lamps, *i.e.* forty-nine for the seven lamps; inasmuch as if fourteen pipes were meant, it would be impossible to imagine any reason why "seven and seven" should be written instead of fourteen. And we cannot be shaken in this conviction, either by the objection "that if there was any proportion between the pipes and the size of the oil-vessel, such a number of pipes could not possibly (?) spring from one oil-can"

(Kochler), or by the statement that "forty-nine would be quite as much at variance with the *original* as fourteen, since that had only one pipe for every lamp" (Hitzig). For the supposed original for the pipes had no existence, inasmuch as the Mosaic candlestick had no pipes at all; and we can form no opinion as to the possibility of forty-nine pipes issuing from one oil-vessel, because we have no information as to the size either of the oil-vessel or of the pipes. (3) The third peculiarity in the visionary candlestick consists in the olive trees on the right and left of the oil-vessel, which supplied it with oil, and whose connection with the candlestick is first described in ver. 12. These three additions which were made to the golden candlestick seen by Zechariah, as contrasted with the golden candlestick of the tabernacle, formed the apparatus through which it was supplied with the oil required to light it continually without the intervention of man.

The interpretation of this vision must therefore be founded upon the meaning of the golden candlestick in the symbolism of the tabernacle, and be in harmony with it. The prophet receives, first of all, the following explanation, in reply to his question on this point: Ver. 4. "*And I answered and spake to the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord?* Ver. 5. *And the angel that talked with me answered and said to me, Knowest thou not what these are? And I said, No, my lord.* Ver. 6. *Then he answered and spake to me thus: This is the word of Jehovah to Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, and not by power, but by my Spirit, saith Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 7. *Who art thou, O great mountain before Zerubbabel? Into a plain! And He will bring out the top-stone amidst shoutings, Grace, grace unto it!*" The question addressed by the prophet to the mediating angel, "What are these?" (*mâh 'ēlleh*, as in ch. ii. 2) does not refer to the two olive trees only (Umbreit, Kliefoth), but to everything described in vers. 2 and 3. We are not warranted in assuming that the prophet, like every other Israelite, knew what the candlestick with its seven lamps signified; and even if Zechariah had been perfectly acquainted with the meaning of the golden candlestick in the holy place, the candlestick seen by him had other things beside the two olive trees which were not to be found in the candlestick of the temple, viz. the *gullâh* and the pipes for the lamps, which

might easily make the meaning of the visionary candlestick a doubtful thing. And the counter-question of the angel, in which astonishment is expressed, is not at variance with this. For that simply presupposes that the object of these additions is so clear, that their meaning might be discovered from the meaning of the candlestick itself. The angel then gives him the answer in ver. 6: "This (the vision as a symbolical prophecy) is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: Not by might," etc. That is to say, through this vision Zerubbabel is informed that it—namely, the work which Zerubbabel has taken in hand or has to carry out—will not be effected by human strength, but by the Spirit of God. The work itself is not mentioned by the angel, but is referred to for the first time in ver. 7 in the words, "He will bring out the top-stone," and then still more clearly described in the word of Jehovah in ver. 9: "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house (the temple), and his hands will finish it." It by no means follows from this that the candlestick, with its seven lamps, represented Zerubbabel's temple (Grotius, Hofmann); for whilst it is impossible that the candlestick, as one article of furniture in the temple, should be a figurative representation of the whole temple, what could the two olive trees, which supplied the candlestick with oil, signify with such an interpretation? Still less can the seven lamps represent the seven eyes of God (ver. 10), according to which the candlestick would be a symbol of God or of the Spirit (Hitzig, Maurer, Schegg). The significance of the candlestick in the holy place centred, as I have shown in my *biblische Archäologie* (i. p. 107), in its seven lamps, which were lighted every evening, and burned through the night. The burning lamps were a symbol of the church or of the nation of God, which causes the light of its spirit, or of its knowledge of God, to shine before the Lord, and lets it stream out into the night of a world estranged from God. As the disciples of Christ were called, as lights of the world (Matt. v. 14), to let their lamps burn and shine, or, as candlesticks in the world (Luke xii. 35; Phil. ii. 15), to shine with their light before men (Matt. v. 16), so was the church of the Old Testament also. The correctness of this explanation of the meaning of the candlestick is placed beyond all doubt by Rev. i. 20, where the seven λυχνίαι, which

John saw before the throne of God, are explained as being the seven *ἐκκλησίαι*, which represent the new people of God, viz. the Christian church. The candlestick itself merely comes into consideration here as the stand which carried the lamps, in order that they might shine, and as such was the divinely appointed form for the realization of the purpose of the shining lamps. In this respect it might be taken as a symbol of the kingdom of God on its formal side, *i.e.* of the divinely appointed organism for the perpetuation and life of the church. But the lamps received their power to burn from the oil, with which they had to be filled before they could possibly burn. Oil, regarded according to its capacity to invigorate the body and increase the energy of the vital spirits, is used in the Scriptures as a symbol of the Spirit of God, not in its transcendent essence, but so far as it works in the world, and is indwelling in the church; and not merely the anointing oil, as Kliefoth supposes, but also the lamp oil, since the Israelites had no other oil than olive oil even for burning, and this was used for anointing also.[1] And in the case of the candlestick, the oil comes into consideration as a symbol of the Spirit of God. There is no force in Kliefoth's objection—namely, that inasmuch as the oil of the candlestick was to be presented by the people, it could not represent the Holy Spirit with its power and grace, as coming from God to man, but must rather

[1] The distinction between lamp oil and anointing oil, upon which Kliefoth founds his interpretation of the visionary candlestick, and which he tries to uphold from the language itself, by the assertion that the anointing oil is always called *shemen*, whereas the lamp oil is called *yitshâr*, is shown to be untenable by the simple fact that, in the minute description of the preparation of the lamp oil for the sacred candlestick, and the repeated allusion to this oil in the Pentateuch, the term *yitshâr* is never used, but always *shemen*, although the word *yitshâr* is by no means foreign to the Pentateuch, but occurs in Num. xviii. 12, Deut. vii. 13, xi. 14, xii. 17, and other passages. According to Ex. xxvii. 20, the lamp oil for the candlestick was to be prepared from *shemen zayith zâkh kâthîth*, pure, beaten olive oil (so also according to Lev. xxiv. 2); and according to Ex. xxx. 24, *shemen zayith*, olive oil, was to be used for anointing oil. Accordingly the lamp oil for the candlestick is called *shemen lammâ'ōr* in Ex. xxv. 6, xxxv. 8, 28, and *shemen hammâ'ōr* in Ex. xxxv. 14, xxxix. 37, and Num. iv. 16; and the anointing oil is called *shemen hammishchâh* in Ex. xxix. 7, xxxi. 11, xxxv. 15, xxxix. 38, xl. 9, Lev. viii. 2, 10, and other passages; and *shemen mishchath-qōdesh* in Ex. xxx. 25. Apart from

represent something human, which being given up to God, is cleansed by God through the fire of His word and Spirit; and being quickened thereby, is made into a shining light. For, apart from the fact that the assumption upon which this argument is founded—namely, that in the oil of the candlestick the Spirit of God was symbolized by the altar fire with which it was lighted—is destitute of all scriptural support, since it is not mentioned anywhere that the lamps of the candlestick were lighted with fire taken from the altar of burnt-offering, but it is left quite indefinite where the light or fire for kindling the lamps was to be taken from; apart, I say, from this, such an argument proves too much (*nimium, ergo nihil*), because the anointing oil did not come directly from God, but was also presented by the people. Supposing, therefore, that this circumstance was opposed to the symbolical meaning of the lamp oil, it would also be impossible that the anointing oil should be a symbol of the Holy Ghost, since not only the oil, but the spices also, which were used in preparing the anointing oil, were given by the people (Ex. xxv. 6). We might indeed say, with Kliefoth, that "the oil, as the fatness of the fruit of the olive tree, is the last pure result of the whole of the vital process of the olive tree, and therefore the quintessence of its nature; and that man also grows, and flourishes, and bears fruit like an olive tree; and therefore the fruit of his life's fruit,

ver. 14 of the chapter before us, *yitshâr* is never used for the lamp oil as such, but simply in the enumeration of the productions of the land, or of the tithes and first-fruits, when it occurs in connection with *tîrôsh*, must or new wine (Num. xviii. 12; Deut. vii. 13, xi. 14, xiv. 23, xviii. 4, xxviii. 51; 2 Chron. xxxi. 5, xxxii. 28; Neh. v. 11, x. 40, xiii. 12; Hos. ii. 10, 24; Joel i. 10, ii. 19, 24; Jer. xxxi. 12; Hag. i. 11), but never in connection with *yayin* (wine), with which *shemen* is connected (1 Chron. xix. 40; 2 Chron. ii. 14, xi. 11; Prov. xxi. 17; Jer. xl. 10). It is evident from this that *yitshâr*, the shining, bears the same relation to *shemen*, fatness, as *tîrôsh*, must, to *yayin*, wine,—namely, that *yitshâr* is applied to oil as the juice of the olive, *i.e.* as the produce of the land, from its shining colour, whilst *shemen* is the name given to it when its strength and use are considered. Hengstenberg's opinion, that *yitshâr* is the rhetorical or poetical name for oil, has no real foundation in the circumstance that *yitshâr* only occurs once in the first four books of the Pentateuch (Num. xviii. 12) and *shemen* occurs very frequently; whereas in Deuteronomy *yitshâr* is used more frequently than *shemen*, viz. the former six times, and the latter

the produce of his personality and of the unfolding of his life, may be compared to oil." But it must also be added (and this Kliefoth has overlooked), that the olive tree could not grow, flourish, and bear fruit, unless God first of all implanted or communicated the power to grow and bear fruit, and then gave it rain and sunshine and the suitable soil for a prosperous growth. And so man also requires, for the production of the spiritual fruits of life, not only the kindling of this fruit by the fire of the word and Spirit of God, but also the continued nourishment and invigoration of this fruit through God's word and Spirit, just as the lighting and burning of the lamps are not effected simply by the kindling of the flame, but it is also requisite that the oil should possess the power to burn and shine. In this double respect the candlestick, with its burning and shining lamps, was a symbol of the church of God, which lets the fruit of its life, which is not only kindled but also nourished by the Holy Spirit, shine before God. And the additions made to the visionary candlestick indicate generally, that the church of the Lord will be supplied with the conditions and requirements necessary to enable it to burn and shine perpetually, *i.e.* that the daughter of Zion will never fail to have the Spirit of God, to make its candlestick bright. (See at ver. 14.)

There is no difficulty whatever in reconciling the answer of the angel in ver. 6 with the meaning of the candlestick, as thus unfolded according to its leading features, without having to resort to what looks like a subterfuge, viz. the idea that ver. 6 does not contain an exposition, but passes on to something new, or without there being any necessity to account, as Koehler does, for the introduction of the candlestick, which he has quite correctly explained (though he weakens the explanation by saying that it applies primarily to Zerubbabel), namely, by assuming that "it was intended, on the one hand, to remind him what the calling of Israel was; and, on the other hand, to admonish him that Israel could never reach this calling by the increase of its might and the exaltation of its strength, but solely by suffering itself to be filled with the Spirit of Jehovah." For the candlestick does not set forth the object after which Israel is to strive, but symbolizes the church of God, as it will shine in the splendour of the light received through the Spirit

of God. It therefore symbolizes the future glory of the people of God. Israel will not acquire this through human power and might, but through the Spirit of the Lord, in whose power Zerubbabel will accomplish the work he has begun. Ver. 7 does not contain a new promise for Zerubbabel, that if he lays to heart the calling of Israel, and acts accordingly, *i.e.* if he resists the temptation to bring Israel into a free and independent position by strengthening its external power, the difficulties which have lain in the way of the completion of the building of the temple will clear away of themselves by the command of Jehovah (Koehler). For there is not the slightest intimation of any such temptation as that supposed to have presented itself to Zerubbabel, either in the vision itself or in the historical and prophetical writings of that time. Moreover, ver. 7 has not at all the form of a promise, founded upon the laying to heart of what has been previously mentioned. The contents of the verse are not set forth as anything new either by נְאֻם יְהוָה (saith Jehovah), or by any other introductory formula. It can only be a further explanation of the word of Jehovah, which is still covered by the words "saith Jehovah of hosts" at the close of ver. 6. The contents of the verse, when properly understood, clearly lead to this. The great mountain before Zerubbabel is to become a plain, not by human power, but by the Spirit of Jehovah. The meaning is given in the second hemistich: He (Zerubbabel) will bring out the top-stone. וְהוֹצִיא is not a simple preterite, "he has brought out the foundation-stone" (viz. at the laying of the foundation of the temple), as Hengstenberg supposes; but a future, "he will bring out," as is evident from the *Vav consec.*, through which הוֹצִיא is attached to the preceding command as a consequence to which it leads. Moreover, אֶבֶן הָרֹאשָׁה does not mean the foundation-stone, which is called אֶבֶן פִּנָּה, *lit.* corner-stone (Job xxxviii. 6; Isa. xxviii. 16; Jer. li. 26), or רֹאשׁ פִּנָּה, the head-stone of the corner (Ps. cxviii. 22), but the stone of the top, *i.e.* the finishing or gable stone (הָרֹאשָׁה with *raphe* as a feminine form of רֹאשׁ, and in apposition to הָאֶבֶן). הוֹצִיא, to bring out, namely out of the workshop in which it had been cut, to set it in its proper place in the wall. That these words refer to the finishing of the building of the temple which Zerubbabel had begun, is placed beyond all doubt by ver. 9.

The great mountain, therefore, is apparently "a figure denoting the colossal difficulties, which rose up mountain high at the continuation and completion of the building of the temple." Koehler adopts this explanation in common with "the majority of commentators." But, notwithstanding this appearance, we must adhere to the view adopted by the Chald., Jerome, Theod. Mops., Theodoret, Kimchi, Luther, and others, that the great mountain is a symbol of the power of the world, or the imperial power, and see no difficulty in the "unwarrantable consequence" spoken of by Koehler, viz. that in that case the plain must be a symbol of the kingdom of God (see, on the contrary, Isa. xl. 4). For it is evident from what follows, that the passage refers to something greater than this, namely to the finishing of the building of the temple that has already begun, or to express it briefly and clearly, that the building of the temple of stone and wood is simply regarded as a type of the building of the kingdom of God, as ver. 9 clearly shows. There was a great mountain standing in the way of this building of Zerubbabel's—namely the power of the world, or the imperial power—and this God would level to a plain. Just as, in the previous vision, Joshua is introduced as the representative of the high-priesthood, so here Zerubbabel, the prince of Judah, springing from the family of David, comes into consideration not as an individual, but according to his official rank as the representative of the government of Israel, which is now so deeply humbled by the imperial power. But the government of Israel has no reality or existence, except in the government of Jehovah. The family of David will rise up into a new royal power and glory in the *Tsemach*, whom Jehovah will bring forth as His servant (ch. iii. 8). This servant of Jehovah will fill the house of God, which Zerubbabel has built, with glory. In order that this may be done, Zerubbabel must build the temple, because the temple is the house in which Jehovah dwells in the midst of His people. On account of this importance of the temple in relation to Israel, the opponents of Judah sought to throw obstacles in the way of its being built; and these obstacles were a sign and prelude of the opposition which the imperial power of the world, standing before Zerubbabel as a great mountain, will offer to the kingdom of God. This mountain is to become a plain. What Zerubbabel the

governor of Judah has begun, he will bring to completion; and as he will finish the building of the earthly temple, so will the true Zerubbabel, the Messiah, *Tsemach*, the servant of Jehovah, build the spiritual temple, and make Israel into a candlestick, which is supplied with oil by two olive trees, so that its lamps may shine brightly in the world. In this sense the angel's reply gives an explanation of the meaning of the visionary candlestick. Just as, according to the economy of the Old Testament, the golden candlestick stood in the holy place of the temple before the face of Jehovah, and could only shine there, so does the congregation, which is symbolized by the candlestick, need a house of God, that it may be able to cause its light to shine. This house is the kingdom of God symbolized by the temple, which was to be built by Zerubbabel, not by human might and power, but by the Spirit of the Lord. In this building the words "He will bring forth the top-stone" find their complete and final fulfilment. The finishing of this building will take place תְּשֻׁאוֹת חֵן חֵן לָהּ, *i.e.* amidst loud cries of the people, "Grace, grace unto it." תְּשֻׁאוֹת is an accusative of more precise definition, or of the attendant circumstances (cf. Ewald, § 204, *a*), and signifies noise, tumult, from שׁוּא = שָׁאָה, a loud cry (Job xxxix. 7; Isa. xxii. 2). The suffix לָהּ refers, so far as the form is concerned, to הָאֶבֶן הָרֹאשָׁה, but actually to *habbayith*, the temple which is finished with the gable-stone. To this stone (so the words mean) may God direct His favour or grace, that the temple may stand for ever, and never be destroyed again.

A further and still clearer explanation of the angel's answer (vers. 6 and 7) is given in the words of Jehovah which follow in vers. 8–10. Ver. 8. "*And the word of Jehovah came to me thus:* Ver. 9. *The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it; and thou wilt know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me to you.* Ver. 10. *For who despiseth the day of small things? and they joyfully behold the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel, those seven: the eyes of Jehovah, they sweep through the whole earth.*" This word of God is not addressed to the prophet through the *angelus interpres*, but comes direct from Jehovah, though, as ver. 9*b* clearly shows when compared with ch. ii. 9*b* and 11*b*, through the *Maleach* Jehovah. Although the words "the hands of Zerub-

babel have laid the foundation of this house" unquestionably refer primarily to the building of the earthly temple, and announce the finishing of that building by Zerubbabel, yet the apodosis commencing with "and thou shalt know" shows that the sense is not thereby exhausted, but rather that the building is simply mentioned here as a type of the spiritual temple (as in ch. vi. 12, 13), and that the completion of the typical temple simply furnishes a pledge of the completion of the true temple. For it was not by the finishing of the earthly building, but solely by the carrying out of the kingdom of God which this shadowed forth, that Judah could discern that the angel of Jehovah had been sent to it. This is also apparent from the reason assigned for this promise in ver. 10, the meaning of which has been explained in very different ways. Many take וְשָׂמְחוּ וגו׳ as an apodosis, and connect it with כִּי מִי־בָז as the protasis: "for whoever despises the day of small things, they shall see with joy," etc. (LXX., Chald., Pesh., Vulg., Luth., Calv., and others); but מִי can hardly be taken as an indefinite pronoun, inasmuch as the introduction of the apodosis by *Vav* would be unsuitable, and it has hitherto been impossible to find a single well-established example of the indefinite מִי followed by a perfect with *Vav consec.* And the idea that *v'sâm'chū* is a circumstantial clause, in the sense of "whereas they see with joy" (Hitzig, Koehler), is equally untenable, for in a circumstantial clause the verb never stands at the head, but always the subject; and this is so essential, that if the subject of the minor (or circumstantial) clause is a noun which has already been mentioned in the major clause, either the noun itself, or at any rate its pronoun, must be repeated (Ewald, § 341, *a*), because this is the only thing by which the clause can be recognised as a circumstantial clause. We must therefore take מִי as an interrogative pronoun: Who has ever despised the day of the small things? and understand the question in the sense of a negation, "No one has ever despised," etc. The perfect *baz* with the syllable sharpened, for *bâz*, from *būz* (like *tach* for *tâch* in Isa. xliv. 18; cf. Ges. § 72, Anm. 8), expresses a truth of experience resting upon facts. The words contain a perfect truth, if we only take them in the sense in which they were actually intended,—namely, that no one who hopes to accomplish, or does accomplish, anything great, despises the day of

the small things. *Yōm q'tannōth*, a day on which only small things occur (cf. Num. xxii. 18). This does not merely mean the day on which the foundation-stone of the temple was first laid, and the building itself was still in the stage of its small beginnings, according to which the time when the temple was built up again in full splendour would be the day of great things (Koehler and others). For the time when Zerubbabel's temple was finished—namely, the sixth year of Darius—was just as miserable as that in which the foundation was laid, and the building that had been suspended was resumed once more. The whole period from Darius to the coming of the Messiah, who will be the first to accomplish great things, is a day of small things, as being a period in which everything that was done for the building of the kingdom of God seemed but small, and in comparison with the work of the Messiah really was small, although it contained within itself the germs of the greatest things. The following perfects, וְיָשְׂמְחוּ וְרָאוּ, have *Vav consec.*, and express the consequence, though not "the necessary consequence, of their having despised the day of small beginnings," as Koehler imagines, who for that reason properly rejects this view, but the consequence which will ensue if the day of small things is not despised. The fact that the clause beginning with *v'sâm'chū* is attached to the first clause of the verse in the form of a consequence, may be very simply explained on the ground that the question "who hath despised," with its negative answer, contains an admonition to the people and their rulers not to despise the small beginnings. If they lay this admonition to heart, the seven eyes of God will see with delight the plumb-lead in the hand of Zerubbabel. In the combination וְיָשְׂמְחוּ וְרָאוּ the verb *sâm'chū* takes the place of an adverb (Ges. § 142, 3, *a*). אֶבֶן הַבְּדִיל is not a stone filled up with lead, but an *'ebhen* which is lead, *i.e.* the plumb-lead or plummet. A plummet in the hand is a sign of being engaged in the work of building, or of superintending the erection of a building. The meaning of the clause is therefore, "Then will the seven eyes of Jehovah look with joy, or with satisfaction, upon the execution," not, however, in the sense of "They will find their pleasure in this restored temple, and look upon it with protecting care" (Kliefoth); for if this were the meaning, the introduction of the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel

would be a very superfluous addition. Zerubbabel is still simply the type of the future Zerubbabel—namely, the Messiah—who will build the true temple of God; and the meaning is the following: Then will the seven eyes of God help to carry out this building. שִׁבְעָה אֵלֶּה cannot be grammatically joined to עֵינֵי יְהוָה in the sense of "these seven eyes," as the position of *'ēlleḳ* (these) between the numeral and the noun precludes this; but עֵינֵי יְהוָה is an explanatory apposition to שִׁבְעָה אֵלֶּה: "those (well-known) seven, (viz.) the eyes of Jehovah." The reference is to the seven eyes mentioned in the previous vision, which are directed upon a stone. These, according to ch. iii. 9, are the sevenfold radiations or operations of the Spirit of the Lord. Of these the angel of the Lord says still further here: They sweep through the whole earth, *i.e.* their influence stretches over all the earth. These words also receive their full significance only on the supposition that the angel of Jehovah is speaking of the Messianic building of the house or kingdom of God. For the eyes of Jehovah would not need to sweep through the whole earth, in order to see whatever could stand in the way and hinder the erection of Zerubbabel's temple, but simply to watch over the opponents of Judah in the immediate neighbourhood and the rule of Darius.

This gave to the prophet a general explanation of the meaning of the vision; for the angel had told him that the house (or kingdom) of God would be built and finished by the Spirit of Jehovah, and the church of the Lord would accomplish its mission, to shine brightly as a candlestick. But there is one point in the vision that is not yet quite clear to him, and he therefore asks for an explanation in vers. 11–14. Ver. 11. "*And I answered and said to him, What are these two olive-trees on the right of the candlestick, and on the left?* Ver. 12. *And I answered the second time, and said to him, What are the two branches (ears) of the olive-trees which are at the hand of the two golden spouts, which pour the gold out of themselves?* Ver. 13. *And he spake to me thus: Knowest thou not what these are? and I said, No, my lord.* Ver. 14. *Then said he, These are the two oil-children, which stand by the Lord of the whole earth.*" The meaning of the olive-trees on the right and left sides of the candlestick (*'al*, over, because the olive-trees rose above the

candlestick on the two sides) is not quite obvious to the prophet. He asks about this in ver. 11; at the same time, recognising the fact that their meaning is bound up with the two *shibbălē hazzēthīm*, he does not wait for an answer, but gives greater precision to his question, by asking the meaning of these two branches of the olive-trees. On שֶׁתֵּי the Masora observes, that the *dagesh forte conjunct.*, which is generally found after the interrogative pronoun *mâh*, is wanting in the שׁ, and was probably omitted, simply because the שׁ has not a full vowel, but a *sheva*, whilst the ת which follows has also a *dagesh*. These branches of the olive-trees were *b'yad*, "at the hand of" (*i.e.* close by, as in Job xv. 23) the two golden *tsant'rōth*, which poured the gold from above into the *gullâh* of the candlestick. *Tsant'rōth* (ἅπ. λεγ.) is supposed by Aben Ezra and others to stand for oil-presses; but there is no further ground for this than the conjecture that the olive-trees could only supply the candlestick with oil when the olives were pressed. The older translators render the word by spouts or "channels" (LXX. μυξωτῆρες, Vulg. *rostra*, Pesh. *noses*). It is probably related in meaning to *tsinnōr*, channel or waterfall, and to be derived from *tsânar*, to rush: hence spouts into which the branches of the olive-trees emptied the oil of the olives, so that it poured with a rush out of them into the oil vessel. The latter is obviously implied in the words *hamm'rīqīm*, etc., which empty out the gold from above themselves, *i.e.* the gold which comes to them from above. *Hazzâhâbh*, the gold which the *tsant'rōth* empty out, is supposed by most commentators to signify the golden-coloured oil. Hofmann (*Weiss. u. Erf.* i. 344–5) and Kliefoth, on the contrary, understand by it real gold, which flowed out of the spouts into the candlestick, so that the latter was thereby perpetually renewed. But as the candlestick is not now for the first time in process of formation, but is represented in the vision as perfectly finished, and as the gold comes from the branches of the olive-trees, it is impossible to think of anything else than the oil which shines like gold. Accordingly the oil (*yitshâr*, lit. shining) is called *zâhâbh*, as being, as it were, liquid gold. Hence arises the play upon words: the spouts are of gold, and they pour gold from above themselves into the candlestick (Hitzig and Koehler). The angel having expressed his astonishment at the prophet's ignorance, as he

does in ver. 5, gives this answer: These (the two bushes of the olive-tree, for which the olive-trees stood there) are the two *b'nē yitshâr*, sons of oil, *i.e.* endowed or supplied with oil (cf. Isa. v. 1), which stand by the Lord of the whole earth, namely as His servants (on *'âmad-'al*, denoting the standing posture of a servant, who rises above his master when seated, see 1 Kings xxii. 19, also Isa. vi. 2). The two children of oil cannot be the Jews and Gentiles (Cyril), or Israel and the Gentile world in their fruitful branches, *i.e.* their believing members (Kliefoth), because the candlestick is the symbol of the church of the Lord, consisting of the believers in Israel and also in the Gentile world. This is just as clear as the distinction between the olive-trees and the candlestick, to which they conduct the oil. Others think of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah (J. D. Mich., Hofm., Baumg., etc.); but although there is no force in Koehler's objection, that in that case there would be a double order of prophets in Israel, since two prophets, both influenced by the Spirit of God, would not imply a double order of prophets, this explanation is decidedly precluded by the fact that two mortal men could not convey to the church for all ages the oil of the Spirit of God. The two sons of oil can only be the two media, anointed with oil, through whom the spiritual and gracious gifts of God were conveyed to the church of the Lord, namely, the existing representatives of the priesthood and the regal government, who were at that time Joshua the high priest and the prince Zerubbabel. These stand by the Lord of the whole earth, as the divinely appointed instruments through whom the Lord causes His Spirit to flow into His congregation. Israel had indeed possessed both these instruments from the time of its first adoption as the people of Jehovah, and both were consecrated to their office by anointing. So far the fact that the olive-trees stand by the side of the candlestick does not appear to indicate anything that the prophet could not have interpreted for himself; and hence the astonishment expressed in the question of the angel in ver. 13. Moreover, the vision was not intended to represent an entirely new order of things, but simply to show the completion of that which was already contained and typified in the old covenant. The seven-armed candlestick was nothing new in itself. All that was new in the candlestick seen by Zechariah was the apparatus through

which it was supplied with oil that it might give light, namely, the connection between the candlestick and the two olive-trees, whose branches bore olives like bunches of ears, to supply it abundantly with oil, which was conveyed to each of its seven lamps through seven pipes. The candlestick of the tabernacle had to be supplied every day with the necessary oil by the hands of the priests. This oil the congregation had to present; and to this end the Lord had to bestow His blessing, that the fruits of the land might be made to prosper, so that the olive-tree should bear its olives, and yield a supply of oil. But this blessing was withdrawn from the nation when it fell away from its God (cf. Joel i. 10). If, then, the candlestick had two olive-trees by its side, yielding oil in such copious abundance, that every one of the seven lamps received its supply through seven pipes, it could never fail to have sufficient oil for a full and brilliant light. This was what was new in the visionary candlestick; and the meaning was this, that the Lord would in future bestow upon His congregation the organs of His Spirit, and maintain them in such direct connection with it, that it would be able to let its light shine with sevenfold brilliancy.

SIXTH VISION: THE FLYING ROLL, AND THE WOMAN IN THE EPHAH.—CHAP. V.

These two figures are so closely connected, that they are to be taken as *one* vision. The circumstance, that a pause is introduced between the first and second view, in which both the ecstatic elevation and the interpreting angel leave the prophet, so that it is stated in ver. 5 that "the angel came forth," furnishes no sufficient reason for the assumption that there were two different visions. For the figure of the ephah with the woman sitting in it is also divided into two views, since the prophet first of all sees the woman and receives the explanation (vers. 5–8), and the further development of the vision is then introduced in ver. 9 with a fresh introductory formula, "And I lifted up my eyes, and saw." And just as this introductory formula, through which new and different visions are introduced in ch. ii. 1 and 5, by no means warrants us in dividing what is seen here into two different visions; so there is nothing in the introduction in ver. 5 to compel us to

separate the vision of the flying roll (vers. 1–4) from the following vision of the ephah, since there is no such difference in the actual contents of the two as to warrant such a separation. They neither stand in such a relation to one another, as that the first sets forth the extermination of sinners out of the holy land, and the second the extermination of sin itself, as Maurer supposes; nor does the one treat of the fate of the sinners and the other of the full measure of the sin; but the vision of the flying roll prepares the way for, and introduces, what is carried out in the vision of the ephah (vers. 5–11); and the connection between the two is indicated formally by the fact that the suffix in עֵינָם in ver. 6 refers back to vers. 3 and 4.

Ver. 1. "*And I lifted up my eyes again, and saw, and behold a flying roll.* Ver. 2. *And he said to me, What seest thou? And I said, I see a flying roll; its length twenty cubits, and its breadth ten cubits.* Ver. 3. *And he said to me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the whole land: for every one that stealeth will be cleansed away from this side, according to it; and every one that sweareth will be cleansed away from that side, according to it.* Ver. 4. *I have caused it to go forth, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, and it will come into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth by my name for deceit: and it will pass the night in the midst of his house, and consume both its beams and its stones.*" The person calling the prophet's attention to the vision, and interpreting it, is the *angelus interpres*. This is not specially mentioned here, as being obvious from what goes before. The roll (book-scroll, *m^egillâh* = *m^egillath sēpher*, Ezek. ii. 9) is seen flying over the earth unrolled, so that its length and breadth can be seen. The statement as to its size is not to be regarded as "an approximative estimate," so that the roll would be simply described as of considerable size (Koehler), but is unquestionably significant. It corresponds both to the size of the porch of Solomon's temple (1 Kings vi. 3), and also to the dimensions of the holy place in the tabernacle, which was twenty cubits long and ten cubits broad. Hengstenberg, Hofmann, and Umbreit, following the example of Kimchi, assume that the reference is to the porch of the temple, and suppose that the roll has the same dimensions as this porch, to indicate that the judgment is "a consequence of the theocracy," or was to issue

from the sanctuary of Israel, where the people assembled before the Lord. But the porch of the temple was neither a symbol of the theocracy, nor the place where the people assembled before the Lord, but a mere architectural ornament, which had no significance whatever in relation to the worship. The people assembled before the Lord in the court, to have reconciliation made for them with God by sacrifice; or they entered the holy place in the person of their sanctified mediators, the priests, as cleansed from sin, there to appear before God and engage in His spotless worship. The dimensions of the roll are taken from the holy place of the tabernacle, just as in the previous vision the candlestick was the Mosaic candlestick of the tabernacle. Through the similarity of the dimensions of the roll to those of the holy place in the tabernacle, there is no intention to indicate that the curse proceeds from the holy place of the tabernacle or of the temple; for the roll would have issued from the sanctuary, if it had been intended to indicate this. Moreover, the curse or judgment does indeed begin at the house of God, but it does not issue or come from the house of God. Kliefoth has pointed to the true meaning in the following explanation which he gives: "The fact that the writing, which brings the curse upon all the sinners of the earth, has the same dimensions as the tabernacle, signifies that the measure will be meted out according to the measure of the holy place;" and again, "the measure by which this curse upon sinners will be meted out, will be the measure of the holy place." With this measure would all sinners be measured, that they might be cut off from the congregation of the Lord, which appeared before God in the holy place. The flight of the roll symbolized the going forth of the curse over the whole land. כָּל־הָאָרֶץ is rendered by Hofmann, Neumann, and Kliefoth "the whole earth," because "it evidently signifies the whole earth in ch. iv. 10, 14, and vi. 5" (Kliefoth). But these passages, in which the Lord of the whole earth is spoken of, do not prove anything in relation to our vision, in which כָּל־הָאָרֶץ is unmistakeably limited to the land of Canaan (Judah) by the antithesis in ver. 11, "the land of Shinar." If the sinners who are smitten by the curse proceeding over כָּל־הָאָרֶץ are to be carried into the land of *Shinar*, the former must be a definite land, and not the earth as the sum of all lands. It

cannot be argued in opposition to this, that the sin of the land in which the true house of God and the true priesthood were, was wiped away by expiation, whereas the sin of the whole world would be brought into the land of judgment, when its measure was concluded by God; for this antithesis is foreign not only to this vision, but to the Scriptures universally. The Scriptures know nothing of any distribution or punishment of sins according to different lands, but simply according to the character of the sinners, viz. whether they are penitent or hardened. At the same time, the fact that כָּל־הָאָרֶץ denotes the whole of the land of Israel, by no means proves that our vision either treats of the "carrying away of Israel into exile," which had already occurred (Ros.), or "sets before them a fresh carrying away into exile, and one still in the future" (Hengstenberg), or that on the coming of the millennial kingdom the sin and the sinners will be exterminated from the whole of the holy land, and the sin thrown back upon the rest of the earth, which is still under the power of the world (Hofmann). The vision certainly refers to the remote future of the kingdom of God; and therefore "the whole land" cannot be restricted to the extent and boundaries of Judæa or Palestine, but reaches as far as the spiritual Israel or church of Christ is spread over the earth; but there is no allusion in our vision to the millennial kingdom, and its establishment within the limits of the earthly Canaan. The curse falls upon all thieves and false swearers. הַנִּשְׁבָּע in ver. 3 is defined more precisely in ver. 4, as swearing in the name of Jehovah for deceit, and therefore refers to perjury in the broadest sense of the word, or to all abuse of the name of God for false, deceitful swearing. Thieves are mentioned for the sake of individualizing, as sinners against the second table of the decalogue; false swearers, as sinners against the first table. The repetition of מִזֶּה כָּמוֹהָ points to this; for *mizzeh*, repeated in correlative clauses, signifies *hinc et illinc*, hence and thence, *i.e.* on one side and the other (Ex. xvii. 12; Num. xxii. 24; Ezek. xlvii. 7), and can only refer here to the fact that the roll was written upon on both sides, so that it is to be taken in close connection with כָּמוֹהָ: "on this side . . . and on that, according to it" (the roll), *i.e.* according to the curse written upon this side and that side of the roll. We have therefore to picture the

roll to ourselves as having the curse against the thieves written upon the one side, and that against the perjurers upon the other. The supposition that *mizzeh* refers to כָּל־הָאָרֶץ is precluded most decidedly, by the fact that *mizzeh* does not mean "thence," *i.e.* from the whole land, but when used adverbially of any place, invariably signifies "hence," and refers to the place where the speaker himself is standing. Moreover, the double use of *mizzeh* is at variance with any allusion to *hâ'ârets*, as well as the fact that if it belonged to the verb, it would stand after כָּמוֹהָ, whether before or after the verb. *Niqqâh*, the *niphal*, signifies here to be cleaned out, like καθαρίζεσθαι in Mark vii. 19 (cf. 1 Kings xiv. 10; Deut. xvii. 12). This is explained in ver. 4 thus: Jehovah causes the curse to go forth and enter into the house of the thief and perjurer, so that it will pass the night there, *i.e.* stay there (*lâneh* third pers. perf. of *lūn*, from *lânâh*, to be blunted, like *zûreh* in Isa. lix. 5, and other verbal formations); it will not remain idle, however, but work therein, destroying both the house and sinners therein, so that beams and stones will be consumed (cf. 1 Kings xviii. 38). The suffix in בְּלָתּוּ (for בְּלָתָהּ, cf. Ges. § 75, Anm. 19) refers to the house, of course including the inhabitants. The following nouns introduced with וְאֵת are in explanatory apposition: both its beams and its stones. The roll therefore symbolizes the curse which will fall upon sinners throughout the whole land, consuming them with their houses, and thus sweeping them out of the nation of God.

To this there is appended in vers. 5–11 a new view, which exhibits the further fate of the sinners who have been separated from the congregation of the saints. Ver. 5. "*And the angel that talked with me went forth, and said to me, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, what is this that goeth out there?* Ver. 6. *And I said, What is it? And he said, This is the ephah going out. And he said, This is their aspect in all the land.* Ver. 7. *And behold a disk of lead was lifted up, and there was a woman sitting in the midst of the ephah.* Ver. 8. *And he said, This is wickedness; and he cast it into the midst of the ephah, and cast the leaden weight upon its mouth.*" With the disappearing of the previous vision, the *angelus interpres* had also vanished from the eyes of the prophet. After a short pause he comes out again, calls the prophet's attention to a new figure which

emerges out of the cloud, and so comes within the range of vision (הַיּוֹצֵאת הַזֹּאת), and informs him with regard to it: "This is the ephah which goeth out." יָצָא, to go out, in other words, to come to view. The *ephah* was the greatest measure of capacity which really existed among the Hebrews for dry goods, and was about the size of a cubic foot; for the *chōmer*, which contained ten ephahs, appears to have had only an ideal existence, viz. for the purpose of calculation. The meaning of this figure is indicated generally in the words זֹאת עֵינָם בכ', the meaning of which depends upon the interpretation to be given to עֵינָם. The suffix of this word can only refer to the sinners mentioned before, viz. the thieves and perjurers; for it is contrary to the Hebrew usage to suppose that the words refer to the expression appended, בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ, in the sense of "all those who are in the whole land" (Koehler). Consequently עַיִן does not mean the eye, but *adspectus*, appearance, or shape, as in Lev. xiii. 55, Ezek. i. 4 sqq; and the words have this meaning: The ephah (bushel) is the shape, *i.e.* represents the figure displayed by the sinners in all the land, after the roll of the curse has gone forth over the land, *i.e.* it shows into what condition they have come through that anathema (Kliefoth). The point of comparison between the ephah and the state into which sinners have come in consequence of the curse, does not consist in the fact that the ephah is carried away, and the sinners likewise (Maurer), nor in the fact that the sin now reaches its full measure (Hofm., Hengstenberg); for "the carrying away of the sinners does not come into consideration yet, and there is nothing at all here about the sin becoming full." It is true that, according to what follows, sin sits in the ephah as a woman, but there is nothing to indicate that the ephah is completely filled by it, so that there is no further room in it; and this thought would be generally out of keeping here. The point of comparison is rather to be found in the explanation given by Kliefoth: "Just as in a bushel the separate grains are all collected together, so will the individual sinners over the whole earth be brought into a heap, when the curse of the end goes forth over the whole earth." We have no hesitation in appropriating this explanation, although we have not rendered הָאָרֶץ "the earth," inasmuch as at the final fulfilment of the vision the holy land will extend over all the earth. Immediately

afterwards the prophet is shown still more clearly what is in the ephah. A covering of lead (*kikkâr*, a circle, a rounding or a circular plate) rises up, or is lifted up, and then he sees a woman sitting in the ephah (*'achath* does not stand for the indefinite article, but is a numeral, the sinners brought into a heap appearing as a unity, *i.e.* as *one* living personality, instead of forming an atomistic heap of individuals). This woman, who had not come into the ephah now for the first time, but was already sitting there, and was only seen now that the lid was raised, is described by the angel as *mirsha'ath*, ungodliness, as being wickedness embodied, just as in 2 Chron. xxiv. 7 this name is given to godless Jezebel. Thereupon he throws her into the ephah, out of which she had risen up, and shuts it with the leaden lid, to carry her away, as the following vision shows, out of the holy land.

Ver. 9. "*And I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and behold there came forth two women, and wind in their wings, and they had wings like a stork's wings; and they carried the ephah between earth and heaven.* Ver. 10. *And I said to the angel that talked with me, Whither are these taking the ephah?* Ver. 11. *And he said to me, To build it a dwelling in the land of Shinar: and it will be placed and set up there upon its stand.*" The meaning of this new scene may easily be discovered. The ephah with the woman in it is carried away between earth and heaven, *i.e.* through the air. Women carry it because there is a woman inside; and two women, because two persons are required to carry so large and heavy a measure, that they may lay hold of it on both sides (תְּשֻׁנָּה with the א dropped; cf. Ges. § 74, Anm. 4). These women have wings, because it passes through the air; and a stork's wings, because these birds have broad pinions, and not because the stork is a bird of passage or an unclean bird. The wings are filled with wind, that they may be able to carry their burden with greater velocity through the air. The women denote the instruments or powers employed by God to carry away the sinners out of His congregation, without any special allusion to this or the other historical nation. This is all that we have to seek for in these features, which only serve to give distinctness to the picture. But the statement in ver. 11 is significant: "to build it a house in the land of Shinar." The pronoun לָהּ with the suffix softened instead of לָהֶ, as in Ex.

ix. 18, Lev. xiii. 4 (cf. Ewald, § 247, *d*), refers grammatically to הָאֵיפָה; but so far as the sense is concerned, it refers to the woman sitting in the ephah, since a house is not built for a measure, but only for men to dwell in. This also applies to the feminine form הַנִּיחָה, and to the suffix in מְכֻנָתָהּ. The building of a house indicates that the woman is to dwell there permanently, as is still more clearly expressed in the second hemistich. הוּכַן refers to בַּיִת, and is not to be taken hypothetically, in the sense of "as soon as the house shall be restored," but is a perfect with *Vav consec.*; and *hūkhan*, the *hophal* of *kūn*, is not to be taken in the sense of restoring, but, in correspondence with *m'khunâh*, in the sense of establishing or building on firm foundations. *M'khunâh:* the firmly established house. In this the woman of sin is brought to rest. The land in which the woman of sin carried away out of the holy land is permanently to dwell, is the land of *Shinar*. This name is not to be identified with *Babel*, so as to support the conclusion that it refers to a fresh removal of the people of Israel into exile; but according to Gen. x. 10 and xi. 2, *Shinar* is the land in which Nimrod founded the first empire, and where the human race built the tower of Babel which was to reach to the sky. The name is not to be taken geographically here as an epithet applied to Mesopotamia, but is a notional or real definition, which affirms that the ungodliness carried away out of the sphere of the people of God will have its permanent settlement in the sphere of the imperial power that is hostile to God. The double vision of this chapter, therefore, shows the separation of the wicked from the congregation of the Lord, and their banishment into and concentration within the ungodly kingdom of the world. This distinction and separation commenced with the coming of the Messiah, and runs through all the ages of the spread and development of the Christian church, until at the time of the end they will come more and more into outward manifestation; and the evil, having been sifted out by the judicial power of God and His Spirit, will form itself into a Babel of the last days, as Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix. clearly show, and attempt a last struggle with the kingdom of God, in which it will be overcome and destroyed by the last judgment.

SEVENTH VISION: THE FOUR CHARIOTS.—CHAP. VI. 1–8.

Ver. 1. "*And again I lifted up my eyes, and saw, and behold four chariots coming forth between the two mountains, and the mountains were mountains of brass.* Ver. 2. *In the first chariot were red horses, and in the second chariot black horses.* Ver. 3. *And in the third chariot white horses, and in the fourth chariot speckled powerful horses.* Ver. 4. *And I answered and said to the angel that talked with me, What are these, my lord?* Ver. 5. *And the angel answered and said to me, These are the four winds of heaven going out, after having stationed themselves by the Lord of the whole earth.* Ver. 6. *Those in which the black horses are, go out into the land of the north, and the white have gone out behind them, and the speckled have gone out into the land of the south.* Ver. 7. *And the powerful ones have gone out, and sought to go, to pass through the earth; and he said, Go ye, and pass through the earth; and they passed through the earth.* Ver. 8. *And he called to me, and spake to me thus: Behold, those which go out into the land of the north let down my spirit in the land of the north.*" The four chariots are explained in ver. 5 by the interpreting angel to be the four winds of heaven, which go forth after they have taken their stand by the Lord of the whole earth, *i.e.* have appeared before Him in the attitude of servants, to lay their account before Him, and to receive commands from Him (הִתְיַצֵּב עַל, as in Job i. 6, ii. 1). This addition shows that the explanation is not a real interpretation; that is to say, the meaning is not that the chariots represent the four winds; but the less obvious figure of the chariots is explained through the more obvious figure of the winds, which answers better to the reality. Since, for example, according to ver. 8, the chariots are designed to carry the Spirit (*rūăch*) of God, there was nothing with which they could be more suitably compared than the winds (*rūăch*) of heaven, for these are the most appropriate earthly substratum to symbolize the working of the Divine Spirit (cf. Jer. xlix. 36; Dan. vii. 2). This Spirit, in its judicial operations, is to be borne by the chariots to the places more immediately designated in the vision. As they go out, after having appeared before God, the two mountains, between which they go out or come forth,

can only be sought in the place where God's dwelling is. But the mountains are of brass, and therefore are not earthly mountains; but they are not therefore mere symbols of the might of God with which His church is defended (Hengst., Neumann), or allusions to the fact that the dwelling-place of God is immoveable and unapproachable (Koehler), or symbols of the imperial power of the world and the kingdom of God (Kliefoth), according to which the power of the world would be just as immoveable as the kingdom of God. The symbol has rather a definite geographical view as its basis. As the lands to which the chariots go are described geographically as the lands of the north and south, the starting-point of the chariots must also be thought of geographically, and must therefore be a place or country lying between the northern and southern lands: this is the land of Israel, or more especially Jerusalem, the centre of the Old Testament kingdom of God, where the Lord had His dwelling-place. It is therefore the view of Jerusalem and its situation that lies at the foundation of the vision; only we must not think of the mountains Zion and Moriah (as Osiander, Maurer, Hofmann, and Umbreit do), for these are never distinguished from one another in the Old Testament as forming two separate mountains; but we have rather to think of Zion and the Mount of Olives, which stood opposite to it towards the east. Both are named as places where or from which the Lord judges the world, viz. the Mount of Olives in ch. xiv. 4, and Zion very frequently, *e.g.* in Joel iii. 16. The place between the two mountains is, then, the valley of Jehoshaphat, in which, according to Joel iii. 2 sqq., the Lord judges the nations. In the vision before us this valley simply forms the starting-point for the chariots, which carry the judgment from the dwelling-place of God into the lands of the north and south, which are mentioned as the seat of the imperial power; and the mountains are of brass, to denote the immoveable firmness of the place where the Lord dwells, and where He has founded His kingdom.

The colour of the horses, by which the four chariots are distinguished, is just as significant here as in ch. i. 8; and indeed, so far as the colour is the same, the meaning is also the same here as there. Three colours are alike, since *b'rud-dîm*, speckled, is not essentially different from *s'ruqqîm*, star-

ling-grey, viz. black and white mixed together (see at ch. i. 8). The black horses are added here. Black is the colour of grief (cf. "black as sackcloth of hair," Rev. vi. 12). The rider upon the black horse in Rev. vi. 5, 6, holds in his hand the emblem of dearness, the milder form of famine. Consequently the colours of the horses indicate the destination of the chariots, to execute judgment upon the enemies of the kingdom of God. Red, as the colour of blood, points to war and bloodshed; the speckled colour to pestilence and other fatal plagues; and the black colour to dearness and famine: so that these three chariots symbolize the three great judgments, war, pestilence, and hunger (2 Sam. xxiv. 11 sqq.), along with which "the noisome beast" is also mentioned in Ezek. xiv. 21 as a fourth judgment. In the vision before us the fourth chariot is drawn by white horses, to point to the glorious victories of the ministers of the divine judgment. The explanation of the chariots in this vision is rendered more difficult by the fact, that on the one hand the horses of the fourth chariot are not only called *b^eruddīm*, but אֲמֻצִּים also; and on the other hand, that in the account of the starting of the chariots the red horses are omitted, and the speckled are distinguished from the אֲמֻצִּים instead, inasmuch as it is affirmed of the former that they went forth into the south country, and of the latter, that "they sought to go that they might pass through the whole earth," and they passed through with the consent of God. The commentators have therefore attempted in different ways to identify הָאֲמֻצִּים in ver. 7 with אֲדֻמִּים. Hitzig and Maurer assume that אמצים is omitted from ver. 6 by mistake, and that אמצים in ver. 7 is a copyist's error for אדמים, although there is not a single critical authority that can be adduced in support of this. Hengstenberg and Umbreit suppose that the predicate אֲמֻצִּים, strong, in ver. 3 refers to all the horses in the four chariots, and that by the "strong" horses of ver. 7 we are to understand the "red" horses of the first chariot. But if the horses of all the chariots were strong, the red alone cannot be so called, since the article not only stands before אֲמֻצִּים in ver. 7, but also before the three other colours, and indicates nothing more than that the colours have been mentioned before. Moreover, it is grammatically impossible that אֲמֻצִּים in ver. 3 should refer to all the four teams; as "we must in that case have had

אֲמֻצִּים כָּלְמוּ" (Koehler). Others (*e.g.* Abulw., Kimchi, Calvin, and Koehler) have attempted to prove that אֲמֻצִּים may have the sense of אַדֻּמִּים; regarding אָמוּץ as a softened form of חָמוּץ, and explaining the latter, after Isa. lxiii. 1, as signifying bright red. But apart from the fact that it is impossible to see why so unusual a word should have been chosen in the place of the intelligible word *'ădummīm* in the account of the destination of the red team in ver. 7, unless אֲמֻצִּים were merely a copyist's error for *'ădummīm*, there are no satisfactory grounds for identifying אָמַץ with חָמוּץ, since it is impossible to adduce any well-established examples of the change of ח into א in Hebrew. The assertion of Koehler, that the Chaldee verb אֲלַם, *robustus fuit*, is חָלַם in Hebrew in Job xxxix. 4, is incorrect; for we find חָלַם in the sense of to be healthy and strong in the Syriac and Talmudic as well, and the Chaldaic אֲלַם is a softened form of עֲלַם, and not of חֲלַם. The fact that in 1 Chron. viii. 35 we have the name תְּאָרֵעַ in the place of תַּחְרֵעַ in 1 Chron. ix. 41, being the only instance of the interchange of א and ח in Hebrew, is not sufficient of itself to sustain the alteration, amidst the great mass of various readings in the genealogies of the Chronicles. Moreover, *châmūts*, from *châmēts*, to be sharp, does not mean red (=*'âdōm*), but a glaring colour, like the Greek ὀξύς; and even in Isa. lxiii. 1 it has simply this meaning, *i.e.* merely "denotes the unusual redness of the dress, which does not look like the purple of a king's talar, or the scarlet of a chlamys" (Delitzsch); or, speaking more correctly, it merely denotes the glaring colour which the dress has acquired through being sprinkled over with red spots, arising either from the dark juice of the grape or from blood. All that remains therefore is to acknowledge, in accordance with the words of the text, that in the interpretation of the vision the departure of the team with the red horses is omitted, and the team with speckled powerful horses divided into two teams —one with speckled horses, and the other with black. We cannot find any support in this for the interpretation of the four chariots as denoting the four imperial monarchies of Daniel, since neither the fact that there are four chariots nor the colour of the teams furnishes any tenable ground for this. And it is precluded by the angel's comparison of the four chariots to the four winds, which point to four quarters of the

globe, as in Jer. xlix. 36 and Dan. vii. 2, but not to four empires rising one after another, one of which always took the place of the other, so that they embraced the same lands, and were merely distinguished from one another by the fact that each in succession spread over a wider surface than its predecessor. The colour of the horses also does not favour, but rather opposes, any reference to the four great empires. Leaving out of sight the arguments already adduced at ch. i. 8 against this interpretation, Kliefoth himself admits that, so far as the horses and their colour are concerned, there is a thorough contrast between this vision and the first one (ch. i. 7–17),—namely, that in the first vision the colour assigned to the horses corresponds to the kingdoms of the world to which they are sent, whereas in the vision before us they have the colour of the kingdoms from which they set out to convey the judgment to the others; and he endeavours to explain this distinction, by saying that in the first vision the riders procure information from the different kingdoms of the world as to their actual condition, whereas in the vision before us the chariots have to convey the judgment to the kingdoms of the world. But this distinction furnishes no tenable ground for interpreting the colour of the horses in the one case in accordance with the object of their mission, and in the other case in accordance with their origin or starting-point. If the intention was to set forth the stamp of the kingdoms in the colours, they would correspond in both visions to the kingdoms upon or in which the riders and the chariots had to perform their mission. If, on the other hand, the colour is regulated by the nature and object of the vision, so that these are indicated by it, it cannot exhibit the character of the great empires.

If we look still further at the statement of the angel as to the destination of the chariots, the two attempts made by Hofmann and Kliefoth to combine the colours of the horses with the empires, show most distinctly the untenable character of this view. According to both these expositors, the angel says nothing about the chariot with the red horses, because the Babylonian empire had accomplished its mission to destroy the Assyrian empire. But the Perso-Median empire had also accomplished its mission to destroy the Babylonian, and therefore the team with the black horses should also have been left

unnoticed in the explanation. On the other hand, Kliefoth asserts, and appeals to the participle יְצֵאִים in ver. 6 in support of his assertion, that the chariot with the horses of the imperial monarchy of Medo-Persia goes to the north country, viz. Mesopotamia, the seat of Babel, to convey the judgment of God thither; that the judgment was at that very time in process of execution, and the chariot was going in the prophet's own day. But although the revolt of Babylon in the time of Darius, and its result, furnish an apparent proof that the power of the Babylonian empire was not yet completely destroyed in Zechariah's time, this intimation cannot lie in the participle as expressing what is actually in process, for the simple reason that in that case the perfects יָצְאוּ which follow would necessarily affirm what had already taken place; and consequently not only would the white horses, which went out behind the black, *i.e.* the horses of the imperial monarchy of Macedonia, have executed the judgment upon the Persian empire, but the speckled horses would have accomplished their mission also, since the same יָצְאוּ is affirmed of both. The interchange of the participle with the perfect does not point to any difference in the time at which the events occur, but simply expresses a distinction in the idea. In the clause with יְצֵאִים the mission of the chariot is expressed through the medium of the participle, according to its idea. The expression "the black horses are going out" is equivalent to, "they are appointed to go out;" whereas in the following clauses with יָצְאוּ the going out is expressed in the form of a fact, for which we should use the present.

A still greater difficulty lies in the way of the interpretation of the colours of the horses as denoting the great empires, from the statement concerning the places to which the teams go forth. Kliefoth finds the reason why not only the black horses (of the Medo-Persian monarchy), but also the white horses (of the Græco-Macedonian), go forth to the north country (Mesopotamia), but the latter after the former, in the fact that not only the Babylonian empire had its seat there, but the Medo-Persian empire also. But how does the going forth of the speckled horses into the south country (Egypt) agree with this? "If the fourth chariot answered to the fourth empire in Daniel, *i.e.* to the Roman empire, since this empire executed the judgment upon the Græco-Macedonian monarchy, this

chariot must of necessity have gone forth to the seat of that monarchy. But that was not Egypt, the south country, but Central Asia or Babylon, where Alexander died in the midst of his endeavours to give a firm foundation to his monarchy. In order to explain the going out of the (fourth) chariot with the speckled horses into the south country, Hofmann inserts between the Græco-Macedonian monarchy and the Roman the empire of Antiochus Epiphanes as a small intermediate empire, which is indicated by the speckled horses, and thereby brings Zechariah into contradiction not only with Daniel's description of the empires, but also with the historical circumstances, according to which, as Kliefoth has already observed, "Antiochus Epiphanes and his power had not the importance of an imperial monarchy, but were merely an offshoot of another imperial monarchy, namely the Græco-Macedonian."[1] Kliefoth's attempt to remove this difficulty is also a failure. Understanding by the spotted strong horses the Roman empire, he explains the separation of the spotted from the powerful horses in the angel's interpretation from the peculiar character of the imperial monarchy of Rome,—namely, that it will first of all appear as an actual and united empire, but will then break up into ten kingdoms, *i.e.* into a plurality of kingdoms embracing the whole

[1] Kliefoth (*Sach.* p. 90) adds, by way of still further argument in support of the above: "The way in which Antiochus Epiphanes is introduced in Dan. viii. is in perfect accordance with these historical circumstances. The third monarchy, the Græco-Macedonian, represented as a he-goat, destroys the Medo-Persian empire; but its first great horn, Alexander, breaks off in the midst of its victorious career: four horns or kingdoms grow out of the Græco-Macedonian, and one of these offshoots of the Macedonian empire is Antiochus Epiphanes, the 'little horn,' the bold and artful king." But Zechariah would no more agree with this description in Daniel than with the historical fulfilment, if he had intended the speckled horses to represent Antiochus Epiphanes. For whereas, like Daniel, he enumerates four imperial monarchies, he makes the spotted horses appear not with the third chariot, but with the fourth, and expressly combines the spotted horses with the powerful ones, which, even according to Hofmann, were intended to indicate the Romans, and therefore unquestionably connects the spotted horses with the Roman empire. If, then, he wished the spotted horses to be understood as referring to Antiochus Epiphanes, he would represent Antiochus Epiphanes not as an offshoot of the third or Græco-Macedonian monarchy, but as the first member of the fourth or Roman, in direct contradiction to the book of Daniel and to the historical order of events.

earth, and finally pass over into the kingdom of Antichrist. Accordingly, the spotted horses go out first of all, and carry the spirit of wrath to the south country, Egypt, which comes into consideration as the kingdom of the Ptolemies, and as that most vigorous offshoot of the Græco-Macedonian monarchy, which survived Antiochus Epiphanes himself. The powerful horses harnessed to the same chariot as the Roman horses go out after this, and wander over the whole earth. They are the divided kingdoms of Daniel springing out of the Roman empire, which are called the powerful ones, not only because they go over the whole earth, but also because Antichrist with his kingdom springs out of them, to convey the judgments of God over the whole earth. But however skilful this interpretation is, it founders on the fact, that it fails to explain the going forth of the speckled horses into the land of the south in a manner corresponding to the object of the vision and the historical circumstances. If the vision represented the judgment, which falls upon the empires in such a manner that the one kingdom destroys or breaks up the other, the speckled horses, which are intended to represent the actual and united Roman empire, would of necessity have gone out not merely into the south country, but into the north country also, because the Roman empire conquered and destroyed not only the one offshoot of the Græco-Macedonian empire, but all the kingdoms that sprang out of that empire. Kliefoth has given no reason for the exclusive reference to the southern branch of this imperial monarchy, nor can any reason be found. The kingdom of the Ptolemies neither broke up the other kingdoms that sprang out of the monarchy of Alexander, nor received them into itself, so that it could be mentioned as *pars pro toto*, and it had no such importance in relation to the holy land and nation as that it could be referred to on that account. If the angel had simply wished to mention a vigorous offshoot of the Græco-Macedonian empire instead of mentioning the whole, he would certainly have fixed his eye upon the kingdom of the Seleucidæ, which developed itself in Antiochus Epiphanes into a type of Antichrist, and have let the speckled horses also go to the north, *i.e.* to Syria. This could have been explained by referring to Daniel; but not their going forth to the south country from the fact that the south country is mentioned in Dan. xi. 5,

as Kliefoth supposes, inasmuch as in this prophecy of Daniel not only the king of the south, but the king of the north is also mentioned, and that long-continued conflict between the two described, which inflicted such grievous injury upon the holy land.

To obtain a simple explanation of the vision, we must consider, above all things, that in all these visions the interpretations of the angel do not furnish a complete explanation of all the separate details of the vision, but simply hints and expositions of certain leading features, from which the meaning of the whole may be gathered. This is the case here. All the commentators have noticed the fact, that the statement in ver. 8 concerning the horses going forth into the north country, viz. that they carry the Spirit of Jehovah thither, also applies to the rest of the teams—namely, that they also carry the Spirit of Jehovah to the place to which they go forth. It is also admitted that the angel confines himself to interpreting single features by individualizing. This is the case here with regard to the two lands to which the chariots go forth. The land of the north, *i.e.* the territory covered by the lands of the Euphrates and Tigris, and the land of the south, *i.e.* Egypt, are mentioned as the two principal seats of the power of the world in its hostility to Israel: Egypt on the one hand, and Asshur-Babel on the other, which were the principal foes of the people of God, not only before the captivity, but also afterwards, in the conflicts between Syria and Egypt for the possession of Palestine (Dan. xi.). If we observe this combination, the hypothesis that our vision depicts the fate of the four imperial monarchies, is deprived of all support. Two chariots go into the north country, which is one representative of the heathen world-power: viz. first of all the black horses, to carry famine thither, as one of the great plagues of God with which the ungodly are punished: a plague which is felt all the more painfully, in proportion to the luxury and excess in which men have previously lived. Then follow the white horses, indicating that the judgment will lead to complete victory over the power of the world. Into the south country, *i.e.* to Egypt, the other representative of the heathen world-power, goes the chariot with the speckled horses, to carry the manifold judgment of death by sword, famine, and pestilence, which is indicated by this colour. After what has been said concerning

the team that went forth into the north country, it follows as a matter of course that this judgment will also execute the will of the Lord, so that it is quite sufficient for a chariot to be mentioned. On the other hand, it was evidently important to guard against the opinion that the judgment would only affect the two countries or kingdoms that are specially mentioned, and to give distinct prominence to the fact that they are only representatives of the heathen world, and that what is here announced applies to the whole world that is at enmity against God. This is done through the explanation in ver. 7 concerning the going out of a fourth team, to pass through the whole earth. This mission is not received by the red horses, but by the powerful ones, as the speckled horses are also called in the vision, to indicate that the manifold judgments indicated by the speckled horses will pass over the earth in all their force. The going forth of the red horses is not mentioned, simply because, according to the analogy of what has been said concerning the other teams, there could be no doubt about it, as the blood-red colour pointed clearly enough to the shedding of blood. The object of the going forth of the chariots is to let down the Spirit of Jehovah upon the land in question. הֵנִיחַ רוּחַ יי, to cause the Spirit of Jehovah to rest, *i.e.* to let it down, is not identical with הֵנִיחַ חֲמָתוֹ, to let out His wrath, in Ezek. v. 13, xvi. 42; for *rūăch* is not equivalent to *chēmâh*, wrath or fury; but the Spirit of Jehovah is *rūăch mishpât* (Isa. iv. 4), a spirit of judgment, which not only destroys what is ungodly, but also quickens and invigorates what is related to God. The vision does not set forth the destruction of the world-power, which is at enmity against God, but simply the judgment by which God purifies the sinful world, exterminates all that is ungodly, and renews it by His Spirit. It is also to be observed, that vers. 6 and 7 are a continuation of the address of the angel, and not an explanation given by the prophet of what has been said by the angel in ver. 5. The construction in ver. 6*a* is anakolouthic, the horses being made the subject in יֹצְאִים, instead of the chariot with black horses, because the significance of the chariots lay in the horses. The object to וַיֹּאמֶר in ver. 7*b* is "the Lord of the whole earth" in ver. 5, who causes the chariots to go forth; whereas in וַיִּזְעֵק אֹתִי in ver. 8 it is the interpreting angel again.

By יַזְעֵק, lit. he cried to him, *i.e.* called out to him with a loud voice, the contents of the exclamation are held up as important to the interpretation of the whole.

THE CROWN UPON JOSHUA'S HEAD.—CHAP. VI. 9–15.

The series of visions closes with a symbolical transaction, which is closely connected with the substance of the night-visions, and sets before the eye the figure of the mediator of salvation, who, as crowned high priest, or as priestly king, is to build the kingdom of God, and raise it into a victorious power over all the kingdoms of this world, for the purpose of comforting and strengthening the congregation. The transaction is the following: Ver. 9. "*And the word of Jehovah came to me thus:* Ver. 10. *Take of the people of the captivity, of Cheldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedahyah, and go thou the same day, go into the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah, whither they have come from Babel;* Ver. 11. *And take silver and gold, and make crowns, and set them upon the head of Joshua the son of Jozadak the high priest.*" By the introduction, "The word of the Lord came to me," the following transaction is introduced as a procedure of symbolical importance. It is evident from vers. 10 and 11 that messengers had come to Jerusalem from the Israelites who had been left behind in Babel, to offer presents of silver and gold, probably for supporting the erection of the temple, and had gone to the house of Josiah the son of Zephaniah. The prophet is to go to them, and to take silver and gold from them, to have a crown made for Joshua the high priest. The construction in vers. 10 and 11 is somewhat broad and dragging. The object is wanting to the inf. absol. לָקוֹחַ, which is used instead of the imperative; and the sentence which has been begun is interrupted by וּבָאתָ וגו׳, so that the verb which stands at the head is resumed in the וְלָקַחְתָּ of ver. 11, and the sentence finished by the introduction of the object. This view is the simplest one. For it is still more impracticable to take לָקוֹחַ in an absolute sense, and either supply the object from the context, or force it out by alterations of the text (Hitzig). If, for example, we were to supply as the object, "that which they are bringing," this meaning would result: "accept what they are bringing, do not refuse

it," without there being any ground for the assumption that there had been any unwillingness to accept the presents. The alteration of מֵחֶלְדַּי into מֵחַמְדַּי, "my jewels," is destitute of any critical support, and מֵחֶלְדַּי is defended against critical caprice by the לְחֵלֶם in ver. 14. Nor can מֵאֵת הַגּוֹלָה be taken as the object to לָקוֹחַ, "take (some) from the emigration," because this thought requires מִן, and is irreconcilable with מֵאֵת, "from with." *Haggōlâh*, lit. the wandering into exile, then those who belong to the wandering, or to the exiled, not merely those who are still in exile, but very frequently also those who have returned from exile. This is the meaning here, as in Ezra iv. 1, vi. 19, etc. *Mēcheldai* is an abbreviation for מֵאֵת חֶלְדַּי. *Cheldai*, *Tobiyah*, and *Yedahyah*, were the persons who had come from Babylon to bring the present. This is implied in the words אֲשֶׁר בָּאוּ מִבָּבֶל, whither they have come from Babel. אֲשֶׁר is an *accus. loci*, pointing back to בֵּית. We are not warranted in interpreting the names of these men symbolically or typically, either by the circumstance that the names have an appellative meaning, like all proper names in Hebrew, or by the fact that *Cheldai* is written *Chēlem* in ver. 14, and that instead of *Josiah* we have there apparently *chēn*. For *chēn* is not a proper name (see at ver. 14), and *chēlem*, *i.e.* strength, is not materially different from *Cheldai*, *i.e.* the enduring one; so that it is only a variation of the name, such as we often meet with. The definition "on that day" can only point back to the day mentioned in ch. i. 7, on which Zechariah saw the night-visions, so that it defines the chronological connection between this symbolical transaction and those night-visions. For, with the explanation given by C. B. Michaelis, "*die isto quo scil. facere debes quæ nunc mando*," the definition of the time is unmeaning. If God had defined the day more precisely to the prophet in the vision, the prophet would have recorded it. Zechariah is to have given to him as much of the silver and gold which they have brought with them as is required to make *'ătârōth*. The plural *'ătârōth* does indeed apparently point to at least two crowns, say a silver and a golden one, as C. B. Michaelis and Hitzig suppose. But what follows cannot be made to harmonize with this. The prophet is to put the *'ătârōth* upon Joshua's head. But you do not put two or more crowns upon the head of one man; and the indifference

with which Ewald, Hitzig, and Bunsen interpolate the words זְרֻבָּבֶל וּבְרֹאשׁ after בְּרֹאשׁ, without the smallest critical authority, is condemned by the fact that in what follows only *one* wearer of a crown is spoken of, and in ver. 13, according to the correct interpretation, there is no "sharp distinction made between the priest and the Messiah." The plural *'ătârōth* denotes here one single splendid crown, consisting of several gold and silver twists wound together, or rising one above another, as in Job xxxi. 36, and just as in Rev. xix. 12 (ἐπὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ διαδήματα πολλά) Christ is said to wear, not many separate diadems, but a crown consisting of several diadems twisted together, as the insignia of His regal dignity.

The meaning of this is explained in vers. 12–15. Ver. 12. "*And speak to him, saying, Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying, Behold a man, His name is Tsemach (Sprout), and from His place will He sprout up, and build the temple of Jehovah.* Ver. 13. *And He will build the temple of Jehovah, and He will carry loftiness, and will sit and rule upon His throne, and will be a priest upon His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between them both.* Ver. 14. *And the crown will be to Chelem, and to Tobijah, and to Jedahjah, and the favour of the son of Zephaniah, for a memorial in the temple of Jehovah.* Ver. 15. *And they that are far off will come and build at the temple of Jehovah; then will ye know that Jehovah of hosts hath sent me to you; and it will come to pass, if ye hearken to the voice of Jehovah your God.*' Two things are stated in these verses concerning the crown: (1) In vers. 12 and 13 the meaning is explained of the setting of the crown upon the head of Joshua the high priest; and (2) in vers. 14, 15, an explanation is given of the circumstance, that the crown had been made of silver and gold presented by men of the captivity. The crowning of Joshua the high priest with a royal crown, which did not properly belong to the high priest as such, as his head-dress is neither called a crown (*'ătârâh*) nor formed part of the insignia of royal dignity and glory, had a typical significance. It pointed to a man who would sit upon his throne as both ruler and priest, that is to say, would combine both royalty and priesthood in his own person and rank. The expression "Speak thou to him" shows that the words of Jehovah are addressed to Joshua, and to him alone (אֵלָיו is singular), and

therefore that Zerubbabel must not be interpolated into ver. 11 along with Joshua. The man whom Joshua is to represent or typify, by having a crown placed upon his head, is designated as the Messiah, by the name *Tsemach* (see at ch. iii. 8); and this name is explained by the expression מִתַּחְתָּיו יִצְמָח. These words must not be taken impersonally, in the sense of "under him will it sprout" (LXX., Luth., Calov., Hitzig, Maurer, and others); for this thought cannot be justified from the usage of the language, to say nothing of its being quite remote from the context, since we have מִתַּחְתָּיו, and not תַּחְתָּיו (under him); and moreover, the change of subject in יִצְמָח and וּבָנָה would be intolerably harsh. In addition to this, according to Jer. xxxiii. 15, the Messiah is called *Tsemach*, because Jehovah causes a righteous growth to spring up to David, so that *Tsemach* is the sprouting one, and not he who makes others or something else to sprout. מִתַּחְתָּיו, "from under himself," is equivalent to "from his place" (Ex. x. 23), *i.e.* from his soil; and is correctly explained by Alting in Hengstenberg thus: "both as to his nation and as to his country, of the house of David, Judah, and Abraham, to whom the promises were made." It also contains an allusion to the fact that He will grow from below upwards, from lowliness to eminence. This Sprout will build the temple of the Lord. That these words do not refer to the building of the earthly temple of stone and wood, as Ros. and Hitzig with the Rabbins suppose, is so obvious, that even Koehler has given up this view here, and understands the words, as Hengstenberg, Tholuck, and others do, as relating to the spiritual temple, of which the tabernacle and the temples of both Solomon and Zerubbabel were only symbols, the temple which is the church of God itself (Hos. viii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 5; Heb. iii. 6; and Eph. ii. 21, 22). Zechariah not only speaks of this temple here, but also in ch. iv. 9, as Haggai had done before him, in Hag. ii. 6–9, which puts the correctness of our explanation of these passages beyond the reach of doubt. The repetition of this statement in ver. 13*a* is not useless, but serves, as the emphatic וְהוּא before this and the following sentence shows, to bring the work of the *Tsemach* into connection with the place He will occupy, in other words, to show the glory of the temple to be built. The two clauses are to be linked together thus: "He who will build the temple, the same will

carry eminence." There is no "antithesis to the building of the temple by Joshua and Zerubbabel" (Koehler) in וְהוּא; but this is quite as foreign to the context as another view of the same commentator, viz. that ver. 13 interrupts the explanation of what the shoot is to be. הוֹד, eminence, is the true word for regal majesty (cf. Jer. xxii. 18; 1 Chron. xxix. 25; Dan. xi. 21). In this majesty He will sit upon His throne and rule, also using His regal dignity and power for the good of His people, and will be a Priest upon His throne, *i.e.* will be at once both Priest and King upon the throne which He assumes. The rendering, "And there will be a priest upon His throne" (Ewald and Hitzig), is precluded by the simple structure of the sentences, and still more by the strangeness of the thought which it expresses; for the calling of a priest in relation to God and the people is not to sit upon a throne, but to stand before Jehovah (cf. Judg. xx. 28; Deut. xvii. 12). Even the closing words of this verse, "And a counsel of peace will be between them both," do not compel us to introduce a priest sitting upon the throne into the text by the side of the *Tsemach* ruling upon His throne. שְׁנֵיהֶם cannot be taken as a neuter in the sense of "between the regal dignity of the Messiah and His priesthood" (Capp., Ros.), and does not even refer to the *Tsemach* and *Jehovah,* but to the *Mōshēl* and *Kōhēn,* who sit upon the throne, united in one person, in the *Tsemach.* Between these two there will be *'ătsath shâlōm.* This does not merely mean, "the most perfect harmony will exist" (Hofmann, Umbreit), for that is a matter of course, and does not exhaust the meaning of the words. *'Atsath shâlōm,* counsel of peace, is not merely peaceful, harmonious consultation, but consultation which has peace for its object; and the thought is the following: The Messiah, who unites in Himself royalty and priesthood, will counsel and promote the peace of His people.

This is the typical meaning of the crowning of the high priest Joshua. But another feature is added to this. The crown, which has been placed upon the head of Joshua, to designate him as the type of the Messiah, is to be kept in the temple of the Lord after the performance of this act, as a memorial for those who bring the silver and gold from the exiles in Babel, and לְחֵן בֶּן־צ', *i.e.* for the favour or grace of the son of Zephaniah. *Chēn* is not a proper name, or another name

for Josiah, but an appellative in the sense of favour, or a favourable disposition, and refers to the favour which the son of Zephaniah has shown to the emigrants who have come from Babylon, by receiving them hospitably into his house. For a memorial of these men, the crown is to be kept in the temple of Jehovah. The object of this is not merely "to guard it against profanation, and perpetuate the remembrance of the givers" (Kliefoth); but this action has also a symbolical and prophetic meaning, which is given in ver. 15 in the words, "Strangers will come and build at the temple of the Lord." Those who have come from the far distant Babylon are types of the distant nations who will help to build the temple of the Lord with their possessions and treasures. This symbolical proceeding therefore furnishes a confirmation of the promise in Hag. ii. 7, that the Lord will fill His temple with the treasures of all nations. By the realization of what is indicated in this symbolical proceeding, Israel will perceive that the speaker has been sent to them by the Lord of hosts; that is to say, not that Zechariah has spoken by the command of God, but that the Lord has sent the angel of Jehovah. For although in what precedes, only the prophet, and not the angel of Jehovah, has appeared as acting and speaking, we must not change the "sending" into "speaking" here, or take the formula וידעתם כּי וגו׳ in any other sense here than in ch. ii. 13, 15, and iv. 9. We must therefore assume, that just as the words of the prophet pass imperceptibly into words of Jehovah, so here they pass into the words of the angel of Jehovah, who says concerning himself that Jehovah has sent him. The words conclude with the earnest admonition to the hearers, that they are only to become partakers of the predicted good when they hearken to the voice of their God. The sentence commencing with והיה does not contain any *aposiopesis;* there is no valid ground for such an assumption as this in the simple announcement, which shows no trace of excitement; but *v'hâyâh* may be connected with the preceding thought, "ye will know," etc., and affirms that they will only discern that the angel of Jehovah has been sent to them when they pay attention to the voice of their God. Now, although the recognition of the sending of the angel of the Lord involves participation in the Messianic salvation, the fact that this recognition is made to

depend upon their giving heed to the word of God, by no means implies that the coming of the Messiah, or the participation of the Gentiles in His kingdom, will be bound up with the fidelity of the covenant nation, as Hengstenberg supposes; but the words simply declare that Israel will not come to the knowledge of the Messiah or to His salvation, unless it hearkens to the voice of the Lord. Whoever intentionally closes his eyes, will be unable to see the salvation of God.

The question whether the prophet really carried out the symbolical action enjoined upon him in vers. 10 sqq., externally or not, can neither be answered in the affirmative nor with a decided negative. The statement in ver. 11, that the prophet, who was hardly a goldsmith, was to make the crown, is no more a proof that it was not actually done, than the talmudic notice in *Middoth* iii., concerning the place where the crown was hung up in the temple, is a proof that it was. For עָשֹׂה in ver. 11 may also express causing to be made; and the talmudic notice referred to does not affirm that this crown was kept in the temple, but simply states that in the porch of the temple there were beams stretching from one wall to the other, and that golden chains were fastened to them, upon which the priestly candidates climbed up and saw crowns; and the verse before us is then quoted, with the formula שנאמר as a confirmation of this.

II. THE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION CONCERNING THE FASTING.—Chap. vii. and viii.

In reply [redacted]estion addressed to the priests and prophets in Jerusale[redacted]essengers of Bethel, whether the day on which Je[redacted]le were reduced to ashes by the Chalda[redacted]a day of mourning and fasting (ch. v[redacted] to the people through Zechariah, that [redacted] fasting as a service well-pleasing to Him, [redacted]es obedience to His word (vers. 4–7), and that He has only been obliged to scatter Israel among the nations on account of its obstinate resistance to the commandments of righteousness, love, and truth made known to them

through the prophets (vers. 8–14), but that now He will turn again to Zion and Jerusalem with great warmth of love, and will bless His people with abundant blessings if they will only perform truth, just judgment, faithfulness, and love one towards another (ch. viii. 1–17). Then will He make the previous fast-days into days of joy and delight to them, and so glorify Himself upon Jerusalem, that many and powerful nations will come to seek and worship the Lord of hosts there (ch. viii. 18–23).

THE FAST-DAYS OF ISRAEL, AND OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD OF GOD.—CHAP. VII.

Vers. 1–3 describe the occasion for this instructive and consolatory "word of God," which was addressed to Zechariah in the fourth year of Darius, *i.e.* two years after the building of the temple was resumed, and two years before its completion, and therefore at a time when the building must have been far advanced, and the temple itself was possibly already finished in the rough. Ver. 1. "*It came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, that the word of Jehovah came to Zechariah, on the fourth (day) of the ninth month, in Kislev.*" In this definition of the time we are surprised first of all at the circumstance, that, according to the Masoretic accentuation, and the division of the verses, the statement of the time is torn into two halves, and the notice of the year is placed after וַיְהִי, whilst that of the month does not follow till after הָיָה דְבַר יי; and secondly, at the fact that the introduction of the occurrence which led to this word of God is appended with the imperfect *c. Vav rel.* (*vayyishlach*), which would then stand in the sense of the pluperfect in opposition to the rule. On these grounds we must give up the Masoretic division of the verses, and connect the notice of the month and day in ver. 1*b* with ver. 2, so that ver. 1 contains merely the general statement that in the fourth year of king Darius the word of the Lord came to Zechariah. What follows will then be appended thus; [redacted]day of the ninth month, in Kislev, Bethel sent, [redacted]ore precise definition of the time is only giv[redacted]on with the following occurrence, because it w[redacted]vident that the word of God which was addressed to t[redacted]et in consequence of that event, could not have been addressed to him before it

occurred. The rendering of the words in ver. 2*a* is also a disputed point. We adopt the following: Ver. 2. "*Then Bethel sent Sharezer and Regem-melech, and his people, to entreat the face of Jehovah,* (ver. 3) *to speak to the priests who were at the house of Jehovah of hosts, and to the prophets, thus: Shall I weep, abstaining in the fifth month as I have now done so many years?*" As *Bēth-ēl* may either signify the house of God, or be the name of the town of Bethel, it may be taken either as *accus. loci*, or as the subject of the sentence. Against the first explanation, which is very widely spread, viz. "it sent to the house of God, or to Bethel, Sharezer," etc., or "they sent to the house of God Sharezer," etc., it may be argued not only that the prophet, in order to make himself intelligible, ought either to have written *'el Bēth-'ēl*, or to have placed *Bēth-'ēl* after the object, but also that *bēth-'ēl* cannot be shown to have been ever applied to the temple of Jehovah, and that it would have been altogether out of place to speak of sending to Bethel, because Jehovah could not be prayed to in Bethel after the captivity. We must therefore take *bēth-'ēl* as the subject, and understand it as denoting the population of Bethel, and not as a name given to the church of the Lord, since there are no conclusive passages to support any such use, as *bēth Y'hōvâh* only is used for the church of God (see at Hos. viii. 1), and here there could be no inducement to employ so unusual an epithet to denote the nation. A considerable number of the earlier inhabitants of Bethel had already returned with Zerubbabel, according to Ezra ii. 28 and Neh. vii. 32; and, according to Neh. xi. 31, the little town appears to have been soon rebuilt. The inhabitants of this city sent an embassy to Jerusalem, namely Sharezer and Rechem-Melech, and his men. The omission of the *nota accus.* אֶת has indeed been adduced as an objection to this interpretation of the names as the object, and the names have been therefore taken as the subject, and regarded as in apposition to *Bēth-ēl*: "Bethel, namely Sharezer and Rechem, etc., sent;" two men are mentioned in connection with [redacted] supposed to have acted as leaders of the embassy, something so harsh and inflexible in the construction of [redacted] apposition as this, that in spite of the omission of the [redacted] refer to regard the names as accusatives. The name *Sharezer* is evidently Assyrian (cf. Isa. xxxvii.

38; Jer. xxxix. 3, 13), so that the man was probably born in Babylonia. The object of sending these men is given first of all in general terms: viz. לְחַלּוֹת אֶת־פְּנֵי יי, *lit.* to stroke the face of Jehovah,—an anthropomorphic expression for affectionate entreaty (see at Ps. cxix. 58), and then defined more precisely in ver. 3, where it is stated that they were to inquire of the priests and prophets, *i.e.* through their mediation, to entreat an answer from the Lord, whether the mourning and fasting were to be still kept up in the fifth month. Through the clause אֲשֶׁר לְבֵית יי the priests are described as belonging to the house of Jehovah, though not in the sense supposed by Kliefoth, namely, "because they were appointed to serve in His house along with the Levites, in the place of the first-born, who were the possession of Jehovah" (Num. iii. 41; Deut. x. 8, 9). There is no such allusion here; but the meaning is simply, "as the persons in the temple, who by virtue of their mediatorial service were able to obtain an answer from Jehovah to a question addressed to Him in prayer." The connection with the prophets points to this. The question הַאֶבְכֶּה is defined by the inf. absol. הִנָּזֵר, as consisting in weeping or lamentation connected with abstinence from food and drink, *i.e.* with fasting. On this use of the *inf. abs.*, see Ewald, § 280, *a*; הִנָּזֵר, to abstain (in this connection from meat and drink), is synonymous with צוּם in ver. 5. זֶה כַּמָּה שָׁנִים: "these how many years," for which we should say, "so many years." *Kammeh* suggests the idea of an incalculably long duration. זֶה, in this and other similar combinations with numerical *data*, has acquired the force of an adverb: now, already (cf. ch. i. 12, and Ewald, § 302, *b*). The subject to אֶבְכֶּה is the population of Bethel, by which the men had been delegated. The question, however, had reference to a subject in which the whole community was interested, and hence the answer from God is addressed to all the people (ver. 5). So far as the circumstances themselves are concerned, we can see from ver. 5 and ch. viii. 19, that during the captivity the Israelites had adopted the custom of commemorating the leading incidents in the Chaldæan catastrophe by keeping fast-days in the fifth, seventh, fourth, and tenth months. In the fifth month (*Ab*), on the tenth day, because, according to Jer. lii. 12, 13, that was the day on which the temple and the city of Jerusalem were destroyed by fire in the nineteenth year

of Nebuchadnezzar, though the seventh day of that month is the date given in 2 Kings xxv. 8, 9 (see the comm. *in loc.*). In the seventh month, according to Jewish tradition, they fasted on the third day, on account of the murder of the governor Gedaliah, and the Judæans who had been left in the land (2 Kings xxv. 25, 26; Jer. xli. 1 sqq.). In the fourth month (*Tammuz*) they fasted on the ninth day, on account of the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the eleventh year of Zedekiah (Jer. xxxix. 2, lii. 6, 7). And lastly, in the tenth month, a fast was kept on the tenth day on account of the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar on that day, in the ninth year of Zedekiah (2 Kings xxv. 1 and Jer. xxxix. 1).[1] The question put by the delegates referred simply to the fasting in the fifth month, in commemoration of the destruction of the temple. And now that the rebuilding of the temple was rapidly approaching completion, it appeared no longer in character to continue to keep this day, especially as the prophets had proclaimed on the part of God, that the restoration of the temple would be a sign that Jehovah had once more restored His favour to the remnant of His people. If this fast-day were given up, the others would probably be also relinquished. The question actually involved the prayer that the Lord would continue permanently to bestow upon His

[1] The later Jews kept the 9th Ab as the day when both the first and second temples were destroyed by fire; and in *Mishna Taanit* iv. 6, five disasters are enumerated, which had fallen upon Israel on that day: viz. (1) the determination of God not to suffer the fathers to enter the promised land; (2 and 3) the destruction of the first and second temples; (4) the conquest of the city of Bether in the time of *Bar-Cochba;* (5) the destruction of the holy city, which Rashi explains from Mic. iii. 12 and Jer. xxvi. 18, but which others refer to the fact that *Turnus Rufus* (either *Turannius Rufus* or *T. Annius Rufus:* cf. Schöttgen, *Horæ hebr. et talm.* ii. 953 sqq., and Jost, *Gesch. des Judenthums*, ii. 77) ploughed over the foundation of the temple. Also, on the seventeenth of the fourth month (*Tammuz*), according to *Mishna Taan.* iv. 6, five disasters are said to have befallen Israel: (1) the breaking of the tables of the law (Ex. xxxii.); (2) the cessation of the daily sacrifice in the first temple from the want of sacrificial lambs (cf. Jer. lii. 6); (3) the breach made in the city walls; (4) the burning of the law by *Apostemus;* and (5) the setting up of the abomination, *i.e.* of an idol, in the temple (Dan. xi. 31, xii. 13). *Vid.* Lundius, *Codex talm. de jejunio*, Traj. ad Rhen. 1694, p. 55 sqq.; also in abstract in *Mishna ed. Surenhus.* ii. pp. 382-3

people the favour which He had restored to them, and not only bring to completion the restoration of the holy place, which was already begun, but accomplish generally the glorification of Israel predicted by the earlier prophets. The answer given by the Lord through Zechariah to the people refers to this, since the priests and prophets could give no information in the matter of their own accord.

The answer from the Lord divides itself into two parts, ch. vii. 4–14 and ch. viii. In the first part He explains what it is that He requires of the people, and why He has been obliged to punish them with exile: in the second He promises them the restoration of His favour and the promised salvation. Each of these parts is divisible again into two sections, ch. vii. 4–7 and ch. vii. 8–14, ch. viii. 1–17 and ch. viii. 18–23; and each of these sections opens with the formula, "The word of Jehovah (of hosts) came to me (Zechariah), saying."

Vers. 4–7. The first of these four words of God contains an exposure of what might be unwarrantable in the question and its motives, and open to disapproval. Ver. 4. "*And the word of Jehovah of hosts came to me thus,* Ver. 5. *Speak to all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When ye fasted and mourned in the fifth and in the seventh (month), and that for seventy years, did ye, when fasting, fast to me?* Ver. 6. *And when ye eat, and when ye drink, is it not ye who eat, and ye who drink?* Ver. 7. *Does it not concern the words, which Jehovah has preached through the former prophets, when Jerusalem was inhabited and satisfied, and her towns round about her, and the south country and the low land were inhabited?*" The thought of vers. 6 and 7 is the following: It is a matter of indifference to God whether the people fast or not. The true fasting, which is well pleasing to God, consists not in a pharisaical abstinence from eating and drinking, but in the fact that men observe the word of God and live thereby, as the prophets before the captivity had already preached to the people. This overthrew the notion that men could acquire the favour of God by fasting, and left it to the people to decide whether they would any longer observe the previous fast-days; it also showed what God would require of them if they wished to obtain the promised blessings. For the inf. absol., see at Hag. i. 6. The fasting in the seventh month was not

the fast on the day of atonement which was prescribed in the law (Lev. xxiii.), but, as has been already observed, the fast in commemoration of the murder of Gedaliah. In the form צַמְתֻּנִי the suffix is not a substitute for the dative (Ges. § 121, 4), but is to be taken as an accusative, expressive of the fact that the fasting related to God (Ewald, § 315, *b*). The suffix is strengthened by אֲנִי for the sake of emphasis (Ges. § 121, 3). In ver. 7 the form of the sentence is elliptical. The verb is omitted in the clause הֲלֹוא אֶת־הַדְּבָרִים, but not the subject, say זֶה, which many commentators supply, after the LXX., the Peshito, and the Vulgate ("Are these not the words which Jehovah announced?"), in which case אֵת would have to be taken as *nota nominativi*. The sentence contains an *aposiopesis*, and is to be completed by supplying a verb, either "should ye not do or give heed to the words which," etc.? or "do ye not know the words?" יֹשֶׁבֶת, as in ch. i. 11, in the sense of sitting or dwelling; not in a passive sense, "to be inhabited," although it might be so expressed. שְׁלֵוָה is synonymous with שַׁאֲנָנָה in ch. i. 11. יָשַׁב, in the sense indicated at the close of the verse, is construed in the singular masculine, although it refers to a plurality of previous nouns (cf. Ges. § 148, 2). In addition to Jerusalem, the following are mentioned as a periphrasis for the land of Judah: (1) her towns round about; these are the towns belonging to Jerusalem as the capital, towns of the mountains of Judah which were more or less dependent upon her: (2) the two rural districts, which also belonged to the kingdom of Judah, viz. the *negeb*, the south country (which Koehler erroneously identifies with the mountains of Judah; compare Josh. xv. 21 with xv. 48), and the *shᵉphēlâh*, or lowland along the coast of the Mediterranean (see at Josh. xv. 33).

Vers. 8–14. The second word of the Lord recals to the recollection of the people the disobedience of the fathers, and its consequences, viz. the judgment of exile, as a warning example. The introduction of the prophet's name in the heading in ver. 8 does not warrant the strange opinion held by Schmieder and Schlier—namely, that our prophet is here reproducing the words of an earlier Zechariah who lived before the captivity—but is merely to be attributed to a variation in the form of expression. This divine word was as follows:

Ver. 9. "*Thus hath Jehovah of hosts spoken, saying, Execute judgment of truth, and show love and compassion one to another.* Ver. 10. *And widows and orphans, strangers and destitute ones, oppress not; and meditate not in your heart the injury of every brother.* Ver. 11. *But they refused to attend, and offered a rebellious shoulder, and hardened their ears that they might not hear.* Ver. 12. *And they made their heart diamond, that they might not hear the law and the words which Jehovah of hosts sent through His Spirit by means of the former prophet, so that great wrath came from Jehovah of hosts.*" כֹּה אָמַר is to be taken as a preterite here, referring to what Jehovah had caused to be proclaimed to the people before the captivity. The kernel of this announcement consisted in the appeal to the people, to keep the moral precepts of the law, to practise the true love of the neighbour in public life and private intercourse. *Mishpat 'ĕmeth*, judgment of truth (cf. Ezek. xviii. 8), is such an administration of justice as simply fixes the eye upon the real circumstances of any dispute, without any personal considerations whatever, and decides them in accordance with truth. For the fact itself, compare Ex. xxii. 20, 21, xxiii. 6-9; Lev. xix. 15-18; Deut. x. 18, 19, xxiv. 14; Isa. i. 17; Jer. vii. 5, 6, xxii. 3; Ezek. xviii. 8; Hos. xii. 7, etc. רָעַת אִישׁ אָחִיו, the injury of a man who is his brother (as in Gen. ix. 5); not "injury one towards another," which would suppose a transposition of the אִישׁ = אִישׁ רָעַת אָחִיו. In vers. 11 and 12 the attitude of the people towards these admonitions of God is described. *Nâthan kâthēph sōrereth:* to give or offer a rebellious shoulder, as in Neh. ix. 29. The figure is borrowed from an ox, which will not allow a yoke to be placed upon its neck (cf. Hos. iv. 16). To make the ears heavy (*hikhbīd*), away from hearing, *i.e.* so that they do not hear (cf. Isa. vi. 10). To make the heart diamond (*shâmīr*), *i.e.* as hard as diamond. A stony heart is a heart not susceptible to impressions (cf. Ezek. xi. 19). The relative אֲשֶׁר before *shâlach* refers to the two nouns named before, viz. *tōrâh* and *d'bhârīm*, though we need not on that account take *tōrâh* in the general sense of instruction. God also sent the law to the people through the prophets, *i.e.* caused them to preach it and impress it upon their hearts. The consequence of this obduracy of the people was, that "there arose great wrath from Jehovah" (cf. ch. i. 2; 2 Kings iii. 27).

This wrath is described in vers 13, 14. Ver. 13. "*It came to pass: as he cried and they did not hear, so will they cry and I shall not hear, said Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 14. *And I will scatter them with a whirlwind over all nations, who did not know them, and the land is laid waste behind them, so that no one passes to and fro. And thus they made the choice land a desert.*" The form of the address changes in ver. 13. Whereas in the protasis the prophet is still speaking of Jehovah in the third person, in the apodosis he introduces Jehovah as speaking (so will they cry, and I, etc.) and announcing the punishment, which He will inflict upon the rebellious and has already inflicted in their captivity. This address of God is continued in ver. 14 as far as וּמְשָׁב. The opinion, that the address terminates with לֹא יָדָעוּם, and that וְהָאָרֶץ commences the account of the accomplishment of the purpose to punish, is not so much at variance with the circumstance, that in that case the last two clauses of ver. 14 would say essentially the same thing, as with the fact that וְהָאָרֶץ וגו׳ cannot, from its very form, be taken as an account of the accomplishment of the divine purpose. The perfect *nâshammâh* in this clause does not preclude our connecting it with the preceding one, but is used to set forth the devastation as a completed fact: the land will be (not become) waste. The infliction of the punishment is expressed in ver. 13 in the form of a divine *talio*. As they have not hearkened to the word of God, so will God, when they call upon Him, namely in distress (cf. Hos. v. 15), also not hear (cf. Jer. xi. 11), but whirl them like a tempest over the nations. The form אֲסָעֲרֵם is the first pers. imperf. *piel* for אֲסַעֲרֵם or אֲסָעֲרֵם, and Aramaic (cf. Ges. § 52, 2, Anm. 2). On the nations whom they do not know, and who will therefore have no pity and compassion upon them, compare Jer. xxii. 28, xvi. 13. מֵעֹבֵר וּמֵשָׁב (cf. ix. 8), that not one goes to and fro in the desolate land; lit. goes away from a place and returns again (cf. Ex. xxxii. 27). In the clause וַיָּשִׂימוּ וגו׳ the result of the stiff-necked obstinacy of the fathers is briefly stated: They have made the choice land a desert (*'erets chemdâh*, as in Jer. iii. 19 and Ps. cvi. 24), so that they have brought upon the land all the calamity which is now bewailed upon the fast-days.

RENEWAL AND COMPLETION OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.—CHAP. VIII.

In this chapter we have the second half of the Lord's answer to the question concerning the fast-days, which promises to the people the restitution of the former relation of grace, and the future glorification of Israel, on the simple condition of their observing the moral precepts of the law. This double promise is contained in two words of God, each of which is divided into a number of separate sayings, containing the separate details of the salvation bestowed by the formula כֹּה אָמַר יי צ׳ (thus saith Jehovah of hosts): the first into seven (vers. 2, 3, 4–5, 6, 7, and ch. viii. 9–13, 14–17), the second into three (vers. 19, 20–22, and 23). Jerome observes, with reference to this: "By the separate words and sentences, in which Israel is promised not only prosperity, but things almost incredible in their magnitude, the prophet declares, 'Thus saith the Almighty God;' saying, in other words, Do not imagine that the things which I promise are my own, and so disbelieve me as only a man; they are the promises of God which I unfold."

Vers. 1–17. Restoration and completion of the covenant relation.—Ver. 1. "*And the word of Jehovah of hosts came, saying,* Ver. 2. *Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and with great fury I am jealous for her.*" The promise commences with the declaration of the Lord, that He has resolved to give active expression once more to the warmth of His love to Zion. The perfects are used prophetically of that which God had resolved to do, and was now about to accomplish. For the fact itself, compare ch. i. 14, 15. This warmth of the love of God towards Zion, and of His wrath towards the nations that were hostile to Zion, will manifest itself in the facts described in ver. 3: "*Thus saith Jehovah, I return to Zion, and shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem will be called city of truth, and the mountain of Jehovah of hosts the holy mountain.*" When Jerusalem was given up into the power of its foes, the Lord had forsaken His dwelling-place in the temple. Ezekiel saw the glory of the Lord depart from the temple (ch. ix. 3, x. 4, 18, xi. 22, 23). Now He is about to resume His abode in Jeru-

salem once more. The difference between this promise and the similar promise in ch. ii. 14–17, is not that in the latter passage Jehovah's dwelling in the midst of His people is to be understood in an ideal and absolute sense, whereas here it simply denotes such a dwelling as had taken place before, as Koehler supposes. This is not implied in שָׁכַנְתִּי, nor is it in harmony with the statement that Jerusalem is to be called a city of truth, and the temple hill the holy mountain. *'Ir 'ĕmeth* does not mean "city of security," but city of truth or fidelity, *i.e.* in which truth and fidelity towards the Lord have their home. The temple mountain will be called the holy mountain, *i.e.* will *be* so, and will be recognised and known as being so, from the fact that Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, will sanctify it by His dwelling there. Jerusalem did not acquire this character in the period after the captivity, in which, though not defiled by gross idolatry, as in the times before the captivity, it was polluted by other moral abominations no less than it had been before. Jerusalem becomes a faithful city for the first time through the Messiah, and it is through Him that the temple mountain first really becomes the holy mountain. The opinion, that there is nothing in the promises in vers. 3–13 that did not really happen to Israel in the period from Zerubbabel to Christ (Kliefoth, Koehler, etc.), is proved to be incorrect by the very words, both of this verse and also of vers. 6, 7, 8, which follow. How could the simple restoration of the previous covenant relation be described in ver. 6 as something that appeared miraculous and incredible to the nation? There is only so much correctness in the view in question, that the promise does not refer exclusively to the Messianic times, but that feeble commencements of its fulfilment accompanied the completion of the work of building the temple, and the restoration of Jerusalem by Nehemiah. But the saying which follows proves that these commencements do not exhaust the meaning of the words.

Ver. 4. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Yet will there sit old men and women in the streets of Jerusalem, every one with his staff in his hand, for the multitude of the days of his life.* Ver. 5. *And the streets of the city will be full of boys and girls playing in their streets.*" Long life, to an extreme old age, and a plentiful number of blooming children, were theocratic blessings,

which the Lord had already promised in the law to His people, so far as they were faithful to the covenant. Consequently there does not appear to be any Messianic element in this promise. But if we compare this fourth verse with Isa. lxv. 20, we shall see that extreme old age also belonged to the blessings of the Messianic times. And as Israel had almost always to suffer most grievously from wars and other calamities, which swept off the people at an untimely age, during the time which extended from Zerubbabel to Christ; it must be admitted, notwithstanding the description of the prosperous times which Israel enjoyed under the government of Simon (1 Macc. xiv. 4–15), that this promise also was only fulfilled in a very meagre measure, so far as Jerusalem was concerned, before the coming of Christ.

Ver. 6. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this nation in those days, will it also be marvellous in my eyes? is the saying of Jehovah of hosts.*" The second clause of this verse is to be taken as a question with a negative answer, גַּם for הֲגַם, as in 1 Sam. xxii. 7, and the meaning is the following: If this (what is promised in vers. 3–5) should appear marvellous, *i.e.* incredible, to the people in those days when it shall arrive, it will not on that account appear marvellous to Jehovah Himself, *i.e.* Jehovah will for all that cause what has been promised actually to occur. This contains an assurance not only of the greatness of the salvation set before them, but also of the certainty of its realization. "The remnant of the nation," as in Hag. i. 12–14.

Ver. 7. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Behold, I save my people out of the land of the rising and out of the land of the setting of the sun.* Ver. 8. *And I bring them hither, and they will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and will be my people, and I shall be their God, in truth and righteousness.*" The deliverance of the people of God out of the heathen lands did indeed commence with the return of a body of exiles from Babylon under the guidance of Zerubbabel, but their deliverance out of all the countries of the earth is still in the future. Instead of all countries, the land of the rising (the east) and the land of the setting (the west) are individualized (cf. Ps. l. 1, cxiii. 3; Isa. lix. 19; Mal. i. 11). This deliverance is first effected through the Messiah. This is indisputably evident from the

words, "I bring them to Jerusalem," by which of course we cannot understand the earthly Jerusalem, since that would not furnish space enough for the Jews scattered throughout all the world, but the open and enlarged Jerusalem mentioned in ch. ii. 8, *i.e.* the Messianic kingdom of God. Then will those who have been gathered together out of all the countries of the earth become in truth God's nation. Israel was the nation of Jehovah, and Jehovah was also Israel's God from the time of the establishment of the old covenant at Sinai (Ex. xxiv.). This relation is to be restored in the future, "in truth and righteousness." This is the new feature by which the future is to be distinguished from the present and the past. The words "in truth and righteousness" belong to the two clauses, "they shall be" and "I will be." For the fact itself, compare Hos. ii. 21, 22; and for the expression, Isa. xlviii. 1 and 1 Kings iii. 6.

After these promises the prophet admonishes the people to be of good courage, because the Lord will from henceforth bestow His blessing upon them Ver. 9. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words from the mouth of the prophets, on the day that the foundation of the house of Jehovah of hosts was laid, the temple, that it may be built.* Ver. 10. *For before those days there were no wages for the men, and no wages of cattle; and whoever went out and in had no peace because of the oppressor: and I drove all men, one against the other.* Ver. 11. *But now I am not as in the former days to the remnant of this people, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 12. *But the seed of peace, the vine, shall yield its fruit, and the land shall yield its produce, and the heaven give its dew; and to the remnant of this people will I give all this for an inheritance.*" Having the hands strong, is the same as taking good courage for any enterprise (thus in Judg. vii. 11, 2 Sam. ii. 7, and Ezek. xxii. 14). This phrase does not refer specially to their courageous continuation of the building of the temple, but has the more general meaning of taking courage to accomplish what the calling of each required, as vers. 10–13 show. The persons addressed are those who hear the words of the prophets in these days. This suggests a motive for taking courage. Because they hear these words, they are to look forward with comfort to the future, and do what their calling

requires. The words of the prophets are the promises which Zechariah announced in vers. 2–8, and his contemporary Haggai in ch. ii. It will not do to take the plural נְבִיאִים in a general sense, as referring to Zechariah alone. For if there had been no prophet at that time beside Zechariah, he could not have spoken in general terms of prophets. By the defining phrase, who are or who rose up at the time when the foundation of the temple was laid, these prophets are distinguished from the earlier ones before the captivity (ch. vii. 7, 12, i. 4), and their words are thereby limited to what Haggai and Zechariah prophesied from that time downwards.. בְּיוֹם does not stand for מִיּוֹם (Hitzig), but *yōm* is used in the general sense of the time at which anything does occur or has occurred. As a more precise definition of יוֹם יִסַּד the word לְהִבָּנוֹת is added, to show that the time referred to is that in which the laying of the foundation of the temple in the time of Cyrus became an eventful fact through the continuation of the building. In vers. 10 sqq. a reason is assigned for the admonition to work with good courage, by an exhibition of the contrast between the present and the former times. Before those days, *sc.* when the building of the temple was resumed and continued, a man received no wages for his work, and even the cattle received none, namely, because the labour of man and beast, *i.e.* agricultural pursuits, yielded no result, or at any rate a most meagre result, by no means corresponding to the labour (cf. Hag. i. 6, 9–11, ii. 16, 19). The feminine suffix attached to אֵינֶנָּה refers with inexactness to the nearest word הַבְּהֵמָה, instead of the more remote שְׂכַר (cf. Ewald, § 317, *c*). In addition to this, on going out and coming in, *i.e.* when pursuing their ordinary avocations, men came everywhere upon enemies or adversaries, and therefore there was an entire absence of civil peace. הַצָּר is not an abstract noun, "oppression" (LXX., Chald., Vulg.), but a concrete, "adversary," oppressor, though not the heathen foe merely, but, as the last clause of ver. 10 shows, the adversaries in their own nation also. In וַאֲשַׁלַּח the ו is not a simple copula, but the ו *consec.* with the compensation wanting, like וַאֲנַרֵּשׁ in Judg. vi. 9 (cf. Ewald, § 232, *h*); and שָׁלַח, to send, used of a hostile nation, is here transferred to personal attacks on the part of individuals. —Vers. 11 sqq. But now the Lord will act differently to His

remaining people, and bless it again with a fruitful harvest of the fruits of the field and soil. כִּי in ver. 12, "for," after a negative clause, "but." זֶרַע הַשָּׁלוֹם, not the seed will be secure (Chald., Pesh.), but the seed of peace, viz. the vine. This is so designated, not because there is a *b^erâkhâh* in the grape (Isa. lxv. 8); but because the vine can only flourish in peaceful times, and not when the land is laid waste by enemies (Koehler). On the words which follow, compare Lev. xxvi. 4 sqq., Ps. lxvii. 7, Hag. i. 10, ii. 19. "Future abundance will compensate for the drought and scarcity of the past" (Jerome).

The whole blessing is finally summed up in one expression in ver. 13: "*And it will come to pass, as ye were a curse among the nations, O house of Judah and house of Israel, so will I endow you with salvation, that ye may be a blessing. Fear not, let your hands be strong.*" The formula, to be a curse among the nations, is to be interpreted according to Jer. xxiv. 9, xxv. 9, xlii. 18, 2 Kings xxii. 19, as equivalent to being the object of a curse, *i.e.* so smitten by God as to serve as the object of curses. In harmony with this, the phrase to "become a blessing" is equivalent to being so blessed as to be used as a benedictory formula (cf. Gen. xlviii. 22; Jer. xxix. 22). This promise is made to the remnant of Judah and Israel, and therefore of all the twelve tribes, who are to become partakers of the future salvation in undivided unity (cf. ch. ix. 10, 13, x. 6, xi. 14). Israel is therefore to look forward to the future without alarm.

The ground upon which this promise rests is given in vers. 14 and 15, and it is closed in vers. 16 and 17 by the addition of the condition upon which it is to be fulfilled. Ver. 14. "*For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: As I thought to do evil to you, when your fathers were angry with me, saith Jehovah of hosts, and repented not;* Ver. 15. *So have I purposed again in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Fear ye not.* Ver. 16. *These are the words that ye are to do: speak truth every one to his neighbour; truth and judgment of peace judge ye in your gates.* Ver. 17. *And let not one devise the evil of his neighbour, and love not the oath of deceit: for all this, I hate it, is the saying of Jehovah.*" As the time of punishment by exile came upon Israel through the decree of God, so is it now a decree of the Lord to show good to Judah. In שָׁבְתִּי זָמַמְתִּי the שָׁבְתִּי takes the place of the adverbial idea "again." The

people have therefore no need to fear, if they are only diligent in practising truth, righteousness, and love to their neighbour. God required the same of the fathers (ch. vii. 9, 10). *Mishpat shâlōm* is such an administration of justice as tends to promote peace and establish concord between those who are at strife. "In your gates," where courts of justice were held (cf. Deut. xxi. 19, xxii. 15, etc.). The אֵת before כָּל־אֵלֶּה in ver. 17 may be accounted for from a kind of attraction, inasmuch as by the insertion of אֲשֶׁר the object "all this" is separated from the verb, to bring it out with emphasis: "As for all this, it is what I hate." Compare the similar use of *'ēth* in Hag. ii. 5, and Ewald, § 277, *d*.

Vers. 18-23. The last word of God gives, in connection with what precedes, the direct answer to the inquiry concerning the fast-days, and consists of three sayings, vers. 19, 20, and 23, of which the second and third explain the contents of the first more clearly. Ver. 18 is the same as vers. 1 and 7 and ch. iv. 8. Ver. 19. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: The fasting of the fourth, and the fasting of the fifth, and the fasting of the seventh, and the fasting of the tenth* (*months*), *will become pleasure and joy to the house of Judah, and good feasts. But truth and peace ye should love.*" On the fast-days mentioned, compare the exposition of ch. vii. 3. These fast-days the Lord will turn into days of joy and cheerful feast-days—namely, by bestowing upon them such a fulness of salvation, that Judah will forget to commemorate the former mournful events, and will only have occasion to rejoice in the blessings of grace bestowed upon it by God; though only when the condition mentioned in vers. 16 and 17 has been fulfilled.[1]

Ver. 20. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Yet will nations come, and inhabitants of many cities.* Ver. 21. *And the inhabitants of one* (*city*) *will go to another, and say, Let us go, go away, to supplicate the face of Jehovah, and to seek Jehovah*

[1] Luther aptly observes: "Keep only what I command, and let fasting alone. Yea, if ye keep my commandments, not only shall such fasts be over and come to an end; but because I will do so much good to Jerusalem, all the affliction, for which ye have chosen and kept such fasting, shall be so forgotten, that ye will be transported with joy when ye think of your fasting, and of the heart's grief on account of which ye fasted for the time," etc.

of hosts.' 'I will also go.' Ver. 22. *And many peoples and strong nations will come, to seek Jehovah of hosts in Jerusalem, and to supplicate the face of Jehovah.*" These verses do not announce a further or second glorification, which God has designed for His people, but simply indicate the nature and magnitude of the salvation appointed for Israel, through which its fast-days will be turned into days of joy. Hitherto Israel had kept days of mourning and fasting on account of the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple; but in the future the Lord will so glorify His city and His house, that not only will Israel keep joyful feasts there, but many and strong heathen nations will go to the house of God, to seek and worship the God of hosts. עוֹד is used with emphasis, so that it resembles a sentence: "It will still come to pass, that," etc. This is how אֲשֶׁר in vers. 21 and 23 is to be taken, and not as the introduction to the saying preceded energetically by עוֹד, for which Hitzig is wrong in referring to Mic. vi. 10. For the fact itself, compare Mic. iv. 1 sqq., Isa. ii. 2 sqq., Jer. xvi. 19. In ver. 21 the thought is individualized. The inhabitants of one city call upon those of another. נֵלְכָה הָלוֹךְ, "we will *go* to supplicate," etc.; and the population of the other city responds to the summons by saying, "I also will go." חָלוֹת אֶת־פְּנֵי, as in ch. vii. 2.

Ver. 23. "*Thus saith Jehovah of hosts: In those days ten men out of all languages of the nations take hold; they will take hold of the skirt of a Jewish man, saying, We will go with you; for we have heard God is with you.*" Not only will the heathen then flow to Jerusalem to seek the God of Israel, but they will crowd together to Israel and Judah to be received into fellowship with them as a nation. Ten men from the heathen nations to one Jewish man: so great will be the pressure of the heathen. *Ten* is used as an indefinite number, denoting a great and complete multitude, as in Gen. xxxi. 7, Lev. xxvi. 26, Num. xiv. 22, and 1 Sam. i. 8. For the figure, compare Isa. iv. 1. וְהֶחֱזִיקוּ is a resumption of יַחֲזִיקוּ in the form of an apodosis. The unusual combination כֹּל לְשֹׁנוֹת הַגּוֹיִם, "all the tongues of the nations," is formed after Isa. lxvi. 18 (הַגּוֹיִם וְהַלְּשֹׁנוֹת, "all nations and tongues," *i.e.* nations of all languages), and on the basis of Gen. x. 20 and 31. For נֵלְכָה עִמָּכֶם, compare Ruth i. 16; and for אֱלֹהִים עִמָּכֶם, 2 Chron. xv. 9.

The promise, that the Lord would change the fast-days in the future into days of rejoicing and cheerful feasts, if Israel only loved truth and peace (ver. 20), when taken in connection with what is said in ch. vii. 5, 6 concerning fasting, left the decision of the question, whether the fast-days were to be given up or to be still observed, in the hands of the people. We have no historical information as to the course adopted by the inhabitants of Judah in consequence of the divine answer. All that we know is, that even to the present day the Jews observe the four disastrous days as days of national mourning. The talmudic tradition in *Rosh-hashana* (f. 18, *a*, *b*), that the four fast-days were abolished in consequence of the answer of Jehovah, and were not restored again till after the destruction of the second temple, is not only very improbable, but is no doubt erroneous, inasmuch as, although the restoration of the days for commemorating the destruction of Jerusalem and the burning of the temple could easily be explained, on the supposition that the second destruction occurred at the same time as the first, it is not so easy to explain the restoration of the fast-days in commemoration of events for which there was no link of connection whatever in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans. In all probability, the matter stands rather thus: that after the receipt of this verbal answer, the people did not venture formally to abolish the fast-days before the appearance of the promised salvation, but let them remain, even if they were not always strictly observed; and that at a later period the Jews, who rejected the Messiah, began again to observe them with greater stringency after the second destruction of Jerusalem, and continue to do so to the present time, not because "the prophecy of the glory intended for Israel (vers. 18–23) is still unfulfilled" (Koehler), but because "blindness in part is happened to Israel," so that it has not discerned the fulfilment, which commenced with the appearance of Christ upon earth.

III. FUTURE OF THE WORLD-POWERS, AND OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.—CHAPS. IX.–XIV.

The two longer prophecies, which fill up the last part of our book (ch. ix.–xi. and xii.–xiv.), show by their headings, as well as by their contents, and even by their formal arrangement, that they are two corresponding portions of a greater whole. In the headings, the fact that they have both the common character of a threatening prophecy or proclamation of judgment, is indicated by the application of the same epithet, *Massâ' d'bhar Y'hōvâh* (burden of the word of Jehovah), whilst the objects, "land of Hadrach" (ch. ix. 1) and "Israel" (ch. xii. 1), point to a contrast, or rather to a conflict between the lands of Hadrach and Israel. This contrast or conflict extends through the contents of both. All the six chapters treat of the war between the heathen world and Israel, though in different ways. In the first oracle (ch. ix.–xi.), the judgment, through which the power of the heathen world over Israel is destroyed and Israel is endowed with strength to overcome all its enemies, forms the fundamental thought and centre of gravity of the prophetic description. In the second (ch. xii.–xiv.), the judgment through which Israel, or Jerusalem and Judah, is sifted in the war with the heathen nations, and translated into the holy nation of the Lord by the extermination of its spurious members, is the leading topic. And lastly, in a formal respect the two oracles resemble one another, in the fact that in the centre of each the announcement suddenly takes a different tone, without any external preparation (ch. xi. 1 and xiii. 7), so that it is apparently the commencement of a new prophecy; and it is only by a deeper research into the actual fact, that the connection between the two is brought out, and the relation between the two clearly seen,—namely, that the second section contains a more minute description of the manner in which the events announced in the first section are to be realized. In the threatening word concerning the land of Hadrach, ch. ix. and x. form the first section, ch. xi. the second; in that concerning Israel, the first section extends from ch. xii. 1 to xiii. 6, and the second from ch. xiii. 7 to the end of the book.

FALL OF THE HEATHEN WORLD, AND DELIVERANCE AND GLORIFICATION OF ZION.—CHAP. IX. AND X.

Whilst the judgment falls upon the land of Hadrach, upon Damascus and Hamath, and upon Phœnicia and Philistia, so that these kingdoms are overthrown and the cities laid waste and the remnant of their inhabitants incorporated into the nation of God (ch. ix. 1–7), Jehovah will protect His people, and cause His King to enter Zion, who will establish a kingdom of peace over the whole earth (vers. 8–10). Those members of the covenant nation who are still in captivity are redeemed, and endowed with victory over the sons of Javan (vers. 11–17), and richly blessed by the Lord their God to overcome all enemies in His strength (ch. x.). The unity of the two chapters, which form the first half of this oracle, is evident from the close substantial connection between the separate sections. The transitions from one complex of thought to the other are so vanishing, that it is a matter of dispute, in the case of ch. x. 1 and 2, for example, whether these verses should be connected with ch. ix., or retained in connection with ch. x. 4 sqq.

Ch. ix. 1–10. JUDGMENT UPON THE LAND OF HADRACH; AND ZION'S KING OF PEACE.—Ver. 1. The true interpretation of this section, and, in fact, of the whole prophecy, depends upon the explanation to be given to the heading contained in this verse. The whole verse reads thus: "*Burden of the word of Jehovah over the land of Hadrach, and Damascus is its resting-place; for Jehovah has an eye upon the men, and upon all the tribes of Israel.*" There is a wide divergence of opinion concerning the land of חַדְרָךְ. We need not stop to give any elaborate refutation to the opinion that *Hadrach* is the name of the Messiah (as some Rabbins suppose), or that it is the name of an unknown Syrian king (Ges., Bleek), or of an Assyrian fire-god, *Adar* or *Asar* (Movers), or of a deity of Eastern Aramæa (Babylonia), as Hitzig maintained, since there is no trace whatever of the existence of such a king or deity; and even Hitzig himself has relinquished his own conjecture. And the view defended by J. D. Mich. and Rosenmüller, that

Hadrach is the name of an ancient city, situated not far from Damascus, is destitute of any tenable basis, since Hengstenberg (*Christol.* iii. p. 372, transl.) has proved that the historical testimonies adduced in support of this rest upon some confusion with the ancient Arabian city of *Drâa*, *Adrâa*, the biblical *Edrei* (Deut. i. 4). As the name *Hadrach* or *Chadrach* never occurs again, and yet a city which gives its name to a land, and occurs in connection with Damascus, Hamath, Tyre, and Sidon, could not possibly have vanished so completely, that even the earlier Jewish and Christian commentators heard nothing of it, *Chadrach* can only be a symbolical name formed by the prophet himself (as Jerome maintained, according to a Jewish tradition), from *chad*, *acris*, sharp, brave, ready for war (in Arabic, حد, *vehemens fuit*, *durus in ira*, *pugna*), and *râkh*, soft, tender, in the sense of sharp-soft, or strong-tender, after the analogy of the symbolical names, *Dumah* for Edom, in Isa. xxi. 11; *Sheshach* for Babylon, in Jer. xxv. 26, li. 41; *Ariel* for Jerusalem, in Isa. xxix. 1, 2, 7. This view can no more be upset by the objection of Koehler, that the interpretation of the name is a disputed point among the commentators, and that it is doubtful why the prophet should have chosen such a symbolical epithet, than by the circumstance that the rabbinical interpretation of the word as a name for the Messiah is evidently false, and has long ago been given up by the Christian commentators. That *Hadrach* denotes a land or kingdom, is raised above all reach of doubt by the fact that *'erets* (the land) is placed before it. But what land? The statement in the following sentence by no means compels us to think of a province of Syria, as Hitzig, Koehler, and others suppose. As the cities and lands which follow are quoted under their ordinary names, it is impossible to imagine any reason for the choice of a symbolical name for another district of Syria bordering upon Damascus and Hamath. The symbolical name rather points to the fact that the land of *Hadrach* denotes a territory, of which Damascus, Hamath, Tyre, Sidon, and Philistia formed the several parts. And this is favoured by the circumstance that the words, "Burden of the word of Jehovah upon the land of *Hadrach*," form the heading to the oracle, in which the preposition ב is used as in the ex-

pression מַשָּׂא בְּעֶרֶב in Isa. xxi. 13, and is to be explained from the phrase נָפַל דָּבָר בְּ in Isa. ix. 7: The burdensome word falls, descends upon the land of Hadrach. The remark of Koehler in opposition to this, to the effect that these words are not a heading, but form the commencement of the exposition of the word of Jehovah through the prophet, inasmuch as the following clause is appended with ו, is quite groundless. The clause in Isa. xiv. 28, "In the year that king Ahaz died was this burden," is also a heading; and the assertion that the ו before וְדַמֶּשֶׂק is not a ו *explic.*, but an actual ו *conjunct.*, rests upon the assumption that the cities and lands mentioned in the course of this prophecy have not already been all embraced by the expression אֶרֶץ חַדְרָךְ,—an assumption which has not been sustained by any proofs. On the contrary, the fact that not only is Damascus mentioned as the resting-place of the word of Jehovah, but Hamath and also the capitals of Phœnicia and Philistia are appended, proves the very opposite. This evidently implies that the burden resting upon the land of Hadrach will affect all these cities and lands. The exposition of the burden announced upon the land of *Hadrach* commences with וְדַמֶּשֶׂק. This is attached to the heading with *Vav*, because, so far as the sense is concerned, *massá'* is equivalent to "it presses as a burden." The exposition, however, is restricted, so far as Damascus and Hamath are concerned, to the simple remark that the burdensome word upon Hadrach will rest upon it, *i.e.* will settle permanently upon it. (The suffix in מְנֻחָתוֹ refers to מַשָּׂא דְּבַר יי׳.) It is only with the lands which stood in a closer relation to Judah, viz. Tyre, Sidon, and the provinces of Philistia, that it assumes the form of a specially prophetic description. The contents of the heading are sustained by the thought in the second hemistich: "Jehovah has an eye upon men, and upon all the tribes of Israel." עֵין אָדָם with the *genit. obj.* signifies an eye *upon* man, analogous to אֲסִירֵי הַתִּקְוָה in ver. 12. אָדָם, as distinguished from "all the tribes of Israel," signifies the rest of mankind, *i.e.* the heathen world, as in Jer. xxxii. 20, where "Israel" and "men" are opposed to one another. The explanatory clause, according to which the burden of Jehovah falls upon the land of Hadrach, and rests upon Damascus, because the eye of Jehovah looks upon mankind and all the tribes of Israel, *i.e.* His providence stretches

over the heathen world as well as over Israel, is quite sufficient in itself to overthrow the assumption of Hofmann and Koehler, that by the land of Hadrach we are to understand the land of Israel. For if the explanatory clause were understood as signifying that the burden, *i.e.* the judgment, would not only fall upon Hamath as the representative of the human race outside the limits of Israel, but also upon the land of Hadrach as the land of all the tribes of Israel, this view would be precluded not only by the circumstance that in what follows heathen nations alone are mentioned as the objects of the judgment, whereas salvation and peace are proclaimed to Israel, but also by the fact that no ground whatever can be discovered for the application of so mysterious an epithet to the land of Israel. According to Hofmann (*Schriftb.* ii. 2, p. 604), אֶרֶץ חַדְרָךְ signifies the whole of the territory of the kingdom of David, which is so called as "the land of Israel, which, though weak in itself, was, through the strength of God, as sharp as a warrior's sword." But if a judgment of destruction, which Hofmann finds in our prophecy, were announced "to all the nations dwelling within the bounds of what was once the Davidic kingdom," the judgment would fall upon Israel in the same way as upon the heathen nations that are named, since the tribes of Israel formed the kernel of the nations who dwelt in what was once the Davidic kingdom, and Israel would therefore show itself as a sharp-soft people. Hence Koehler has modified this view, and supposes that only the heathen dwelling within the limits of the nation of the twelve tribes are threatened with Jehovah's judgment,—namely, all the heathen within the land which Jehovah promised to His people on their taking possession of Canaan (Num. xxxiv. 1–12). But apart from the unfounded assumption that *Hadrach* is the name of a district of Syria on the border of Damascus and Hamath, this loophole is closed by the fact that, according to Num. xxxiv. 1 sqq., Hamath and Damascus are not included in the possession promised to Israel. According to Num. xxxiv. 8, the northern boundary of the land of Israel was to extend to Hamath, *i.e.* to the territory of the kingdom of Hamath, and Damascus is very far beyond the eastern boundary of the territory assigned to the Israelites (see the exposition of Num. xxxiv. 1–12). Now, if the land of Hadrach, Damascus, and

Hamath were not within the ideal boundaries of Israel, and if Hamath and Hadrach did not belong to the Israelitish kingdom in the time of David, the other lands or cities mentioned in our oracle cannot be threatened with the judgment on account of their lying within the Mosaic boundaries of the land of Israel, or being subject to the Israelites for a time, but can only come into consideration as enemies of Israel whose might was to be threatened and destroyed by the judgment. Consequently the land of *Hadrach* must denote a land hostile to the covenant nation or the kingdom of God, and can only be a symbolical epithet descriptive of the Medo-Persian empire, which is called sharp-soft or strong-weak on account of its inwardly divided character, as Hengstenberg and Kliefoth assume. Now, however difficult it may be satisfactorily to explain the reason why Zechariah chose this symbolical name for the Medo-Persian monarchy, so much is certain, that the choice of a figurative name was much more suitable in the case of the dominant empire of that time, than in that of any small country on the border of Damascus or Hamath. All the cities and lands enumerated after "the land of Hadrach," as losing their glory at the same time, belonged to the Medo-Persian monarchy. Of these the prophet simply refers to Damascus and Hamath in general terms; and it is only in the case of the Phœnician and Philistian cities that he proceeds to a special description of their fall from their lofty eminence, because they stood nearest to the kingdom of Israel, and represented the might of the kingdom of the world, and its hostility to the kingdom of God, partly in the worldly development of their own might, and partly in their hostility to the covenant nation. The description is an individualizing one throughout, exemplifying general facts by particular cities. This is also evident from the announcement of salvation for Zion in vers. 8–10, from which we may see that the overthrow of the nations hostile to Israel stands in intimate connection with the establishment of the Messianic kingdom; and it is also confirmed by the second half of our chapter, where the conquest of the imperial power by the people of God is set forth in the victories of Judah and Ephraim over the sons of Javan. That the several peoples and cities mentioned by name are simply introduced as representatives of the imperial power, is evident from

the distinction made in this verse between (the rest of) mankind and all the tribes of Israel.

Ver. 2. "*And Hamath also, which borders thereon; Tyre and Sidon, because it is very wise.* Ver. 3. *And Tyre built herself a stronghold, and heaped up silver like dust, and gold like dirt of the streets.* Ver. 4. *Behold, the Lord will cause it to be taken, and smite its might in the sea, and she will be consumed by fire.*" *Chămâth* is appended to Damascus by *v'gam* (and also). *Tigbol-bâh* is to be taken as a relative clause; and *bâh* refers to *chămâth*, and not to *'erets chadrâkh* (the land of Hadrach). "*Hamath* also," *i.e.* Ἐπιφάνεια on the Orontes, the present *Hamah* (see at Gen. x. 18), which borders on Damascus, *i.e.* which has its territory touching the territory of Damascus, *sc.* will be a resting-place of the burden of Jehovah. The relative clause connects *Hamath* with *Damascus*, and separates it from the names which follow. Damascus and Hamath represent Syria. Tyre and Sidon, the two capitals of Phœnicia, are connected again into a pair by the explanatory clause כִּי חָכְמָה מְאֹד. For although חָכְמָה is in the singular, it cannot be taken as referring to *Sidon* only, because Tyre is mentioned again in the very next verse as the subject, and the practical display of its wisdom is described. The singular חָכְמָה cannot be taken distributively in this sense, that being wise applies in just the same manner to both the cities (Koehler); for the cases quoted by Gesenius (§ 146, 4) are of a totally different kind, since there the subject is in the plural, and is construed with a singular verb; but צִידוֹן is subordinate to צֹר, "Tyre with Sidon," Sidon being regarded as an annex of Tyre, answering to the historical relation in which the two cities stood to one another, —namely, that Tyre was indeed originally a colony of Sidon, but that it very soon overshadowed the mother city, and rose to be the capital of all Phœnicia (see the comm. on Isa. xxiii.), so that even in Isaiah and Ezekiel the prophecies concerning Sidon are attached to those concerning Tyre, and its fate appears interwoven with that of Tyre (cf. Isa. xxiii. 4, 12; Ezek. xxviii. 21 sqq.). Hence we find Tyre only spoken of here in vers. 3 and 4. This city showed its wisdom in the fact that it built itself a fortress, and heaped up silver and gold like dust and dirt of the streets. Zechariah has here in his mind the insular Tyre, which was built about three or four stadia from

the mainland, and thirty stadia to the north of *Palæ-tyrus*, and which is called מָעוֹז הַיָּם in Isa. xxiii. 4, because, although very small in extent, it was surrounded by a wall a hundred and fifty feet high, and was so strong a fortification, that Shalmaneser besieged it for five years without success, and Nebuchadnezzar for thirteen years, and apparently was unable to conquer it (see Delitzsch on *Isaiah*, vol. i. p. 416). This fortification is called *mâtsōr*. Here Tyre had heaped up immense treasures. *Châr*ūts is shining gold (Ps. lxviii. 14, etc.). But the wisdom through which Tyre had acquired such might and such riches (cf. Ezek. xxviii. 4, 5) would be of no help to it. For it was the wisdom of this world (1 Cor. i. 20), which ascribes to itself the glory due to God, and only nourishes the pride out of which it sprang. The Lord will take the city. *Hōrīsh* does not mean to drive from its possession—namely, the population (Hitzig)—for the next two clauses show that it is not the population of Tyre, but the city itself, which is thought of as the object; ner does it mean to "give as a possession"—namely, their treasures (Calv., Hengst., etc.)—but simply to take possession, to take, to conquer, as in Josh. viii. 7, xvii. 12, Num. xiv. 24 (Maurer, Koehler). And will smite in the sea חֵילָהּ, not "her bulwarks:" for חֵיל, when used of fortifications, neither denotes the city wall nor earthworks, but the moat, including the small outer wall (2 Sam. xx. 15) as distinguished from the true city wall (*chōmâh*, Isa. xxvi. 1, Lam. ii. 8), and this does not apply to the insular Tyre; moreover, חֵיל cannot be taken here in any other sense than in Ezek. xxviii. 4, 5, which Zechariah follows. There it denotes the might which Tyre had acquired through its wisdom, not merely warlike or military power (Koehler), but might consisting in its strong situation and artificial fortification, as well as in the wealth of its resources for defence. This will be smitten in the sea, because Tyre itself stood in the sea. And finally, the city will be destroyed by fire.

Ver. 5. "*Ashkelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza, and tremble greatly; and Ekron, for her hope has been put to shame; and the king will perish out of Gaza, and Ashkelon will not dwell.* Ver. 6. *The bastard will dwell in Ashdod; and I shall destroy the pride of the Philistines.* Ver. 7. *And I shall take away his blood out of his mouth, and his abominations from between his teeth; and he will also remain to our God, and will be as a*

tribe-prince in Judah, and Ekron like the Jebusite." From the Phœnicians the threat turns against the Philistines. The fall of the mighty Tyre shall fill the Philistian cities with fear and trembling, because all hope of deliverance from the threatening destruction is thereby taken away (cf. Isa. xxiii. 5). תֵּרֶא is jussive. The effect, which the fall of Tyre will produce upon the Philistian cities, is thus set forth as intended by God. The description is an individualizing one in this instance also. The several features in this effect are so distributed among the different cities, that what is said of each applies to all. They will not only tremble with fear, but will also lose their kingship, and be laid waste. Only four of the Philistian capitals are mentioned, Gath being passed over, as in Amos i. 6, 8, Zeph. ii. 4, and Jer. xxv. 20; and they occur in the same order as in Jeremiah, whose prophecy Zechariah had before his mind. To וְעַזָּה we must supply תֵּרֶא from the parallel clause; and to עֶקְרוֹן not only תֵּרֶא, but also וְתִירָא. The reason for the fear is first mentioned in connection with *Ekron*,—namely, the fact that the hope is put to shame. הוֹבִישׁ is the *hiphil* of בּוֹשׁ (Ewald, § 122, *e*), in the ordinary sense of this *hiphil*, to be put to shame. מִבְטָהּ with *seghol* stands for מִבְטָהּ (Ewald, § 88, *d*, and 160, *d*), the object of hope or confidence. Gaza loses its king. *Melekh* without the article is the king as such, not the particular king reigning at the time of the judgment; and the meaning is, "Gaza will henceforth have no king," *i.e.* will utterly perish, answering to the assertion concerning Ashkelon: לֹא תֵשֵׁב, she will not dwell, *i.e.* will not come to dwell, a poetical expression for be inhabited (see at Joel iii. 20). The reference to a king of Gaza does not point to times before the captivity. The Babylonian and Persian emperors were accustomed to leave to the subjugated nations their princes or kings, if they would only submit as vassals to their superior control. They therefore bore the title of "kings of kings" (Ezek. xxvi. 7; cf. Herod. iii. 15; Stark, *Gaza*, pp. 229, 230; and Kochler, *ad h. l.*). In Ashdod will *mamzēr* dwell. This word, the etymology of which is obscure (see at Deut. xxiii. 3, the only other passage in which it occurs), denotes in any case one whose birth has some blemish connected with it; so that he is not an equal by birth with the citizens of a city or the inhabitants of a land. Hengstenberg therefore renders it freely, though not

inappropriately, by *Gesindel* (rabble). The dwelling of the bastard in Ashdod is not at variance with the fact that Ashkelon "does not dwell," notwithstanding the individualizing character of the description, according to which what is affirmed of one city also applies to the other. For the latter simply states that the city will lose its native citizens, and thus forfeit the character of a city. The dwelling of bastards or rabble in Ashdod expresses the deep degradation of Philistia, which is announced in literal terms in the second hemistich. The pride of the Philistines shall be rooted out, *i.e.* everything shall be taken from them on which as Philistines they based their pride, viz. their power, their fortified cities, and their nationality. "These words embrace the entire contents of the prophecy against the Philistines, affirming of the whole people what had previously been affirmed of the several cities" (Hengstenberg). A new and important feature is added to this in ver. 7. Their religious peculiarity—namely, their idolatry—shall also be taken from them, and their incorporation into the nation of God brought about through this judgment. The description in ver. 7 is founded upon a personification of the Philistian nation. The suffixes of the third pers. sing. and the pronoun הוּא in ver. 7*a* do not refer to the *mamzēr* (Hitzig), but to *p'lishtīm* (the Philistines), the nation being comprehended in the unity of a single person. This person appears as an idolater, who, when keeping a sacrificial feast, has the blood and flesh of the sacrificial animals in his mouth and between his teeth. *Dâmīm* is not human blood, but the blood of sacrifices; and *shiqqutsīm*, abominations, are not the idols, but the idolatrous sacrifices, and indeed their flesh. Taking away the food of the idolatrous sacrifices out of their mouth denotes not merely the interruption of the idolatrous sacrificial meals, but the abolition of idolatry generally. He also (the nation of the Philistines regarded as a person) will be left to our God. The *gam* refers not to the Phœnicians and Syrians mentioned before, of whose being left nothing was said in vers. 1–4, but to the idea of "Israel" implied in לֵאלֹהֵינוּ, *our* God. Just as in the case of Israel a "remnant" of true confessors of Jehovah is left when the judgment falls upon it, so also will a remnant of the Philistines be left for the God of Israel. The attitude of this remnant towards the people of God is shown in the clauses which follow. He will

be like an *'alluph* in Judah. This word, which is applied in the earlier books only to the tribe-princes of the Edomites and Horites (Gen. xxxvi. 15, 16; Ex. xv. 15; 1 Chron. i. 51 sqq.), is transferred by Zechariah to the tribe-princes of Judah. It signifies literally not a phylarch, the head of an entire tribe (*matteh*, φυλή), but a chiliarch, the head of an *'eleph*, one of the families into which the tribes were divided. The meaning "friend," which Kliefoth prefers (cf. Mic. vii. 5), is unsuitable here; and the objection, that "all the individuals embraced in the collective אֶלֶף cannot receive the position of tribe-princes in Judah" (Kliefoth), does not apply, because אֶלֶף is not an ordinary collective, but the remnant of the Philistines personified as a man. Such a remnant might very well assume the position of a chiliarch of Judah. This statement is completed by the addition "and Ekron," *i.e.* the Ekronite "will be like the Jebusite." The Ekronite is mentioned for the purpose of individualizing in the place of all the Philistines. "Jebusite" is not an epithet applied to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, but stands for the former inhabitants of the citadel of Zion, who adopted the religion of Israel after the conquest of this citadel by David, and were incorporated into the nation of the Lord. This is evident from the example of the Jebusite Araunah, who lived in the midst of the covenant nation, according to 2 Sam. xxiv. 16 sqq., 1 Chron. xxi. 15 sqq., as a distinguished man of property, and not only sold his threshing-floor to king David as a site for the future temple, but also offered to present the oxen with which he had been ploughing, as well as the plough itself, for a burnt-offering. On the other hand, Koehler infers, from the conventional mode of expression employed by the subject when speaking to his king, "*thy* God," and the corresponding words of David, "*my* God" instead of our God, that Araunah stood in the attitude of a foreigner towards the God of Israel; but he is wrong in doing so. And there is quite as little ground for the further inference drawn by this scholar from the fact that the servants of Solomon and the Nethinim are reckoned together in Ezra ii. 58 and Neh. vii. 60, in connection with the statement that Solomon had levied bond-slaves for his buildings from the remnants of the Canaanitish population (1 Kings ix. 20), viz. that the Jebusites reappeared in the Nethinim of

the later historical books, and that the Nethinim "given by David and the princes" were chiefly Jebusites, according to which "Ekron's being like a Jebusite is equivalent to Ekron's not only meeting with reception into the national fellowship of Israel through circumcision, but being appointed, like the Jebusites, to service in the sanctuary of Jehovah." On the contrary, the thought is simply this: The Ekronites will be melted up with the people of God, like the Jebusites with the Judæans. Kliefoth also observes quite correctly, that "there is no doubt that what is specially affirmed of the Philistians is also intended to apply to the land of Chadrach, to Damascus, etc., as indeed an absolute generalization follows expressly in ver. 10. . . . Just as in what precedes, the catastrophe intended for all these lands and nations is specially described in the case of Tyre alone; so here conversion is specially predicted of the Philistines alone."

If we inquire now into the historical allusion or fulfilment of this prophecy, it seems most natural to think of the divine judgment, which fell upon Syria, Phœnicia, and Philistia through the march of Alexander the Great from Asia Minor to Egypt. After the battle at Issus in Cilicia, Alexander sent one division of his army under Parmenio to Damascus, to conquer this capital of Cœle-Syria. On this expedition Hamath must also have been touched and taken. Alexander himself marched from Cilicia direct to Phœnicia, where Sidon and the other Phœnician cities voluntarily surrendered to him; and only Tyre offered so serious a resistance in its confidence in its own security, that it was not till after a seven months' siege and very great exertions that he succeeded in taking this fortified city by storm. On his further march the fortified city of Gaza also offered a prolonged resistance, but it too was eventually taken by storm (cf. Arrian, ii. 15 sqq.; Curtius, iv. 12, 13, and 2–4; and Stark, *Gaza*, p. 237 sqq.). On the basis of these facts, Hengstenberg observes (*Christol.* iii. p. 369), as others have done before him, that "there can be no doubt that in vers. 1–8 we have before us a description of the expedition of Alexander as clear as it was possible for one to be given, making allowance for the difference between prophecy and history." But Koehler has already replied to this, that the prophecy in ver. 7 was not fulfilled by the deeds of Alexander,

since neither the remnant of the Phœnicians nor the other heathen dwelling in the midst of Israel were converted to Jehovah through the calamities connected with Alexander's expedition; and on this ground he merely regards the conquests of Alexander as the commencement of the fulfilment, which was then continued throughout the calamities caused by the wars of succession, the conflicts between the Egyptians, Syrians, and Romans, until it was completed by the fact that the heathen tribes within the boundaries of Israel gradually disappeared as separate tribes, and their remnants were received into the community of those who confessed Israel's God and His anointed. But we must go a step further, and say that the fulfilment has not yet reached its end, but is still going on, and will until the kingdom of Christ shall attain that complete victory over the heathen world which is foretold in vers. 8 sqq.

Vers. 8–10. Whilst the heathen world falls under the judgment of destruction, and the remnant of the heathen are converted to the living God, the Lord will protect His house, and cause the King to appear in Jerusalem, who will spread out His kingdom of peace over all the earth. Ver. 8. "*I pitch a tent for my house against military power, against those who go to and fro, and no oppressor will pass over them any more; for now have I seen with my eyes.* Ver. 9. *Exult greatly, O daughter Zion; shout, daughter Jerusalem: behold, thy King will come to thee: just and endowed with salvation is He; lowly and riding upon an ass, and that upon a foal, the she-ass's son.* Ver. 10. *And I cut off the chariots out of Ephraim, and the horses out of Jerusalem, and the war-bow will be cut off: and peace will He speak to the nations; and His dominion goes from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.*" *Châhâh*, to encamp, to pitch a tent. לְבֵיתִי, *dat. commod.* "for my house," for the good of my house. The house of Jehovah is not the temple, but Israel as the kingdom of God or church of the Lord, as in Hos. viii. 1, ix. 15, Jer. xii. 7, and even Num. xii. 7, from which we may see that this meaning is not founded upon the temple, but upon the national constitution given to Israel, *i.e.* upon the idea of the house as a family. In the verse before us we cannot think of the temple, for the simple reason that the temple was not a military road for armies on the march either while it was standing, or, as Koehler supposes, when it was

in ruins. מִצָּבָה stands, according to the Masora, for מִצָּבָא = מִן־צָבָא, not however in the sense of without an army, but "on account of (against) a hostile troop," protecting His house from them. But Böttcher, Koehler, and others, propose to follow the LXX. and read מַצָּבָה, military post, after 1 Sam. xiv. 12, which is the rendering given by C. B. Michaelis and Gesenius to מִצָּבָה. But this does not apply to חָנָה, for a post (מַצָּבָה, that which is set up) stands up, and does not lie down. מִצָּבָה is more precisely defined by מֵעֹבֵר וּמָשֹׁב, as going through and returning, *i.e.* as an army marching to and fro (cf. ch. vii. 14). There will come upon them no more (עֲלֵיהֶם, *ad sensum*, referring to בֵּיתִי) *nōgēs*, *lit.* a bailiff or taskmaster (Ex. iii. 7), then generally any oppressor of the nation. Such oppressors were Egypt, Asshur, Babel, and at the present time the imperial power of Persia. This promise is explained by the last clause: Now have I seen with mine eyes. The object is wanting, but it is implied in the context, viz. the oppression under which my nation sighs (cf. Ex. ii. 25, iii. 7). *'Attāh* (now) refers to the ideal present of the prophecy, really to the time when God interposes with His help; and the perfect רָאִיתִי is prophetic. God grants help to His people, by causing her King to come to the daughter Zion. To show the magnitude of this salvation, the Lord calls upon the daughter Zion, *i.e.* the personified population of Jerusalem as a representative of the nation of Israel, namely the believing members of the covenant nation, to rejoice. Through מַלְכֵּךְ, *thy* King, the coming one is described as the King appointed for Zion, and promised to the covenant nation. That the Messiah is intended, whose coming is predicted by Isaiah (ix. 5, 6), Micah (v. 1 sqq.), and other prophets, is admitted with very few exceptions by all the Jewish and Christian commentators.[1] לָךְ, not only to thee, but also for thy good. He is *tsaddīq*, righteous, *i.e.* not one who has right, or the good cause (Hitzig), nor merely one righteous in character, answering in all respects to the will of Jehovah (Koehler), but animated with righteousness, and maintaining in His government this first virtue of a ruler (cf. Isa. xi. 1–4; Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, xxxiii. 15, 16, etc.). For He is also נוֹשָׁע, *i.e.* not *σώζων*, *salvator*, helper (LXX., Vulg., Luth.), since the *niphal* has not the active or transitive sense of the *hiphil* (מוֹשִׁיעַ),

[1] See the history of the exposition in Hengstenberg's *Christology*.

nor merely the passive σωζόμενος, *salvatus*, delivered from suffering; but the word is used in a more general sense, endowed with יֶשַׁע, salvation, help from God, as in Deut. xxxiii. 29, Ps. xxxiii. 16, or furnished with the assistance of God requisite for carrying on His government. The next two predicates describe the character of His rule. עָנִי does not mean gentle, πραΰς (LXX. and others) = עָנָו, but lowly, miserable, bowed down, full of suffering. The word denotes "the whole of the lowly, miserable, suffering condition, as it is elaborately depicted in Isa. liii." (Hengstenberg.) The next clause answers to this, "riding upon an ass, and indeed upon the foal of an ass." The ו before עַל עַיִר is epexegetical (1 Sam. xvii. 40), describing the ass as a young animal, not yet ridden, but still running behind the she-asses. The youthfulness of the animal is brought out still more strongly by the expression added to עַיִר, viz. בֶּן־אֲתֹנוֹת, *i.e.* a foal, such as asses are accustomed to bear (אֲתֹנוֹת is the plural of the species, as in כְּפִיר אֲרָיוֹת, Judg. xiv. 5; שְׁעִיר הָעִזִּים, Gen. xxxvii. 31, Lev. iv. 23). "Riding upon an ass" is supposed by most of the more modern commentators to be a figurative emblem of the peacefulness of the king, that He will establish a government of peace, the ass being regarded as an animal of peace in contrast with the horse, because on account of its smaller strength, agility, and speed, it is less adapted for riding in the midst of fighting and slaughter than a horse. But, in the first place, this leaves the heightening of the idea of the ass by the expression "the young ass's foal" quite unexplained. Is the unridden ass's foal an emblem of peace in a higher degree than the full-grown ass, that has already been ridden?[1] And secondly, it is indeed correct that the ass was only used in war as the exception, not the rule, and when there were no horses to be had (cf. Bochart, *Hieroz.* i. p. 158, ed. Ros.); and also correct that in the East it is of a nobler breed, and not so despised as it is with us; but it is also a

[1] We may see how difficult it is to reconcile the emphasis laid upon the ass's foal with this explanation of the significance of the ass, from the attempts made by the supporters of it to bring them into harmony. The assertion made by Ebrard, that עַיִר denotes an ass of noble breed, and בֶּן־אֲתֹנוֹת signifies that it is one of the noblest breed, has been already proved by Kochler to be a fancy without foundation; but his own attempt to deduce the following meaning of this riding upon a young ass from the

fact that in the East, and more especially among the Israelites, it was only in the earlier times, when they possessed no horses as yet, that distinguished persons rode upon asses (Judg. v. 10, x. 4, xii. 14; 2 Sam. xvii. 23, xix. 27), whereas in the time of David the royal princes and kings kept mules for riding instead of asses (2 Sam. xiii. 29, xviii. 9; 1 Kings i. 33, xxxviii. 44); and from the time of Solomon downwards, when the breeding of horses was introduced, not another instance occurs of a royal person riding upon an ass, although asses and mules are still constantly used in the East for riding and as beasts of burden; and lastly, that in both the ancient and modern East the ass stands much lower than the horse, whilst in Egypt and other places (Damascus for example), Christians and Jews were, and to some extent still are, only allowed to ride upon asses, and not upon horses, for the purpose of putting them below the Mohammedans (for the proofs, see Hengstenberg's *Christology*, iii. pp. 404–5). Consequently we must rest satisfied with this explanation, that in accordance with the predicate עָנִי the riding of the King of Zion upon the foal of an ass is an emblem, not of peace, but of lowliness, as the Talmudists themselves interpreted it. "For the ass is not a more peaceful animal than the horse, but a more vicious one" (Kliefoth).—Ver. 10. Just as the coming of the King does not contain within itself a sign of earthly power and exaltation, so will His kingdom not be established by worldly power. The war-chariots and horses, in which the kingdoms of the world seek their strength, will be exterminated by Jehovah out of Ephraim and Jerusalem (cf. Mic. v. 9). And so also will the war-chariots, for which "the battle-bow" stands synecdochically. Ephraim denotes the former kingdom of the ten tribes, and Jerusalem is mentioned as the capital in the place of the kingdom of Judah. Under the Messiah will the two kingdoms that were formerly divided be united once more, and through the destruction of their

precepts concerning the sacrifices, viz. that the future king is riding in the service of Israel, and therefore comes in consequence of a mission from Jehovah, can be proved to fail, from the fact that he is obliged to collect together the most heterogeneous precepts, of which those in Num. xix. 2, Deut. xxi. 3, and 1 Sam. vi. 7, that for certain expiatory purposes animals were to be selected that had never borne a yoke, have a much more specific meaning than that of simple use in the service of Jehovah.

military power will their nature be also changed, the covenant nation be divested of its political and worldly character, and made into a spiritual nation or kingdom. The rule of this King will also extend far beyond the limits of the earthly Canaan. He will speak peace to the nations, *i.e.* will not command peace through His authoritative word (Hitzig, Koehler, etc.), but bring the contests among the nations to an end (Mic. iv. 3); for *dibbēr shâlōm* does not mean to command peace, but it either simply denotes such a speaking as has peace for its subject, giving an assurance of peace and friendship, *i.e.* uttering words of peace (a meaning which is inapplicable here), or signifies to speak peace for the purpose of bringing disputes to an end (Esth. x. 3). But this is done not by authoritative commands, but by His gaining the nations over through the spiritual power of His word, or establishing His spiritual kingdom in the midst of them. It is only as thus interpreted, that the statement concerning the extension of His kingdom harmonizes with the rest. This statement rests upon Ps. lxxii. 8, "from sea to sea," as in Amos viii. 12 and Mic. vii. 12, viz. from the sea to the other end of the world where sea begins again. "From the river:" *i.e.* from the Euphrates, which is intended here by *nâhâr* without the article, as in Mic. vii. 12 and Isa. vii. 20, and is mentioned as the remotest eastern boundary of the land of Israel, according to Gen. xv. 18, Ex. xxiii. 31, as being the *terminus a quo*, to which the ends of the earth are opposed as the *terminus ad quem*.

The leading thought in the promise (vers. 8–10) is therefore the following: When the catastrophe shall burst upon the Persian empire, Israel will enjoy the marvellous protection of its God, and the promised King will come for Zion, endowed with righteousness and salvation, but in outward humiliation; and through the extermination of the materials of war out of Israel, as well as by the peaceful settlement of the contests of the nations, He will establish a kingdom of peace, which will extend over all the earth. On the fulfilment of this prophecy, we learn from the gospel history, that when Jesus took His last journey to Jerusalem, He so arranged His entrance into this city, that our prophecy (ver. 9), "Say ye to the daughter Zion, Behold, thy King cometh," etc., was fulfilled (cf. Matt. xxi. 2 sqq., Mark xi. 2 sqq., Luke xix. 30 sqq., and John xii.

14 sqq.). The exact agreement between the arrangement made by Jesus on this occasion and our prophecy is especially evident from the account given by Matthew, according to which Jesus ordered not only the ass's foal (πῶλον, ὀνάριον), upon which He rode into Jerusalem, to be brought, as Mark, Luke, and John relate, but a she-ass and a foal with her (Matt. xxi. 2 and 7), "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet" (ver. 4), although He could really only ride upon one animal. The she-ass was to follow, to set forth Zechariah's figurative description with greater completeness. For we see, from the corresponding accounts of the other three evangelists, that Jesus only mounted the ass's foal. John, even when quoting our prophecy, only mentions the "sitting on an ass's colt" (ver. 15), and then adds in ver. 16, that the allusion in this act of Jesus to the Old Testament prophecy was only understood by the disciples after Jesus was glorified. By this mode of entering Jerusalem before His death, Jesus intended to exhibit Himself to the people as the King foretold by the prophets, who, coming in lowliness, would establish His kingdom through suffering and dying, so as to neutralize the carnal expectations of the people as to the worldly character of the Messianic kingdom. The fulfilment, however, which Jesus thereby gave to our prophecy is not to be sought for in this external agreement between His act and the words of the prophet. The act of Jesus was in itself simply an embodiment of the thought lying at the basis of the prophecy,—namely, that the kingdom of the Messiah would unfold itself, through lowliness and suffering, to might and glory; that Jesus, as the promised Messiah, would not conquer the world by the force of arms, and so raise His people to political supremacy, but that He would found His kingdom by suffering and dying,—a kingdom which, though not of this world, would nevertheless overcome the world. The figurative character of the prophetic picture, according to which "riding upon an ass" merely serves to individualize עָנִי, and set forth the lowliness of the true King of Zion under appropriate imagery, has been already pointed out by Calvin[1] and Vitringa; and the latter has also

[1] Calvin says: "I have no doubt that the prophet added this clause (viz. 'riding upon an ass,' etc.) as an appendix to the word עָנִי, as much as to say: The King of whom I speak will not be illustrious for His magni-

correctly observed, that the prophecy would have been fulfilled in Christ, even if He had not made His entry into Jerusalem in this manner.[1] Hengstenberg and Koehler adopt the same view. Nevertheless, this entry of Christ into Jerusalem forms the commencement of the fulfilment of our prophecy, and that not merely inasmuch as Jesus thereby declared Himself to be the promised Messiah and King of Zion, and set forth in a living symbol the true nature of His person and of His kingdom in contrast with the false notions of His friends and foes, but still more in this respect, that the entry into Jerusalem formed the commencement of the establishment of His kingdom, since it brought to maturity the resolution on the part of the Jewish rulers to put Him to death; and His death was necessary to reconcile the sinful world to God, and restore the foundation of peace upon which His kingdom was to be built. With the spread of His kingdom over the earth, treated of in ver. 10, the fulfilment continues till the annihilation of all the ungodly powers, after which all war will cease. But this end can only be reached through severe conflicts and victory. This is the subject of the following section.

Vers. 11–17.—Israel's Redemption from Captivity, and Victory over the Heathen.—Ver. 11. "*Thou also, for the sake of thy covenant blood, I release thy captives out of the pit wherein there is no water.* Ver. 12. *Return to the fortress, ye prisoners of hope. Even to-day I proclaim: Double will I repay to thee.*" This is addressed to the daughter Zion, *i.e.* to all Israel, consisting of Ephraim and Judah. We not only learn this from the context, since both of them are spoken

ficent and splendid state, as earthly princes generally are." He then gives this explanation of the riding upon the ass: "He will not prevail by His great exaltation; nor will He be conspicuous for arms, riches, splendour, the number of his soldiers, or even the royal insignia, which attract the eyes of the people."

[1] Vitringa says, on Isa. liii. 4: "In that passage of Zechariah, indeed, according to its spiritual and mystical sense, his meaning would have been evident without this accident of the entry of Christ into Jerusalem; but when God would put all the emphasis of which the words are capable upon the predictions uttered by the prophets, His own providence took care that this accident should also occur, so that no part of the machinery might be wanting here."

of before (ver. 10) and afterwards (ver. 13); but it is also obvious from the expression *b'dam b'rīthēkh*, since the covenant blood belonged to all Israel of the twelve tribes (Ex. xxiv. 8). גַּם־אַתְּ stands at the head absolutely, on account of the emphasis lying upon the אַתְּ. But as the following clause, instead of being directly attached to אַתְּ, is so constructed that the pronoun אַתְּ is continued with suffixes, the question arises, to what the גַּם is to be taken as referring, or which is the antithesis indicated by גַּם. The answer may easily be obtained if we only make it clear to ourselves which of the two words, with the second pers. suffix, forms the object of the assertion made in the entire clause. This is not בְּדַם־בְּרִיתֵךְ, but אֲסִירַיִךְ: thou also (= thee)—namely, thy prisoners—I release. But the emphasis intended by the position in which גַּם־אַתְּ is placed does not rest upon the prisoners of Israel in contrast with any other prisoners, but in contrast with the Israel in Jerusalem, the daughter Zion, to which the King is coming. Now, although גַּם actually belongs to אֲסִירַיִךְ, it refers primarily to the אַתְּ to which it is attached, and this only receives its more precise definition afterwards in אֲסִירַיִךְ. And the allusion intended by גַּם is simply somewhat obscured by the fact, that before the statement to which it gives emphasis בְּדַם־בְּרִיתֵךְ is inserted, in order from the very first to give a firm pledge of the promise to the people, by declaring the motive which induced God to make this fresh manifestation of grace to Israel. This motive also acted as a further reason for placing the pronoun אַתְּ at the head absolutely, and shows that אַתְּ is to be taken as an address, as for example in Gen. xlix. 8. בְּדַם־בְּרִיתֵךְ: literally, being in thy covenant blood, because sprinkled therewith, the process by which Israel was expiated and received into covenant with God (Ex. xxiv. 8). "The covenant blood, which still separates the church and the world from one another, was therefore a certain pledge to the covenant nation of deliverance out of all trouble, so long, that is to say, as it did not render the promise nugatory by wickedly violating the conditions imposed by God" (Hengstenberg). The new matter introduced by גַּם־אַתְּ in ver. 11 is therefore the following: The pardon of Israel will not merely consist in the fact that Jehovah will send the promised King to the daughter Zion; but He will also redeem such members of His

nation as shall be still in captivity out of their affliction. The perfect *shillachtī* is prophetic. Delivering them out of a pit without water is a figure denoting their liberation out of the bondage of exile. This is represented with an evident allusion to the history of Joseph in Gen. xxxvii. 22, as lying in a pit whereiñ there is no water, such as were used as prisons (cf. Jer. xxxviii. 6). Out of such a pit the captive could not escape, and would inevitably perish if he were not drawn out. The opposite of the pit is בְּצָרוֹן, a place cut off, *i.e.* fortified, not the steep height, although fortified towns were generally built upon heights. The prisoners are to return where they will be secured against their enemies; compare Ps. xl. 3, where the rock is opposed to the miry pit, as being a place upon which it is possible to stand firmly. "Prisoners of hope" is an epithet applied to the Israelites, because they possess in their covenant blood a hope of redemption. גַּם־הַיּוֹם, also to-day, *i.e.* even to-day or still to-day, "notwithstanding all threatening circumstances" (Ewald, Hengstenberg). I repay thee double, *i.e.*, according to Isa. lxi. 7, a double measure of glory in the place of the sufferings.

This thought is supported in vers. 13 sqq. by a picture of the glory intended for Israel. Ver. 13. "*For I stretch Judah as my bow, fill it with Ephraim, and stir up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Javan, and make thee like the sword of a hero.* Ver. 14. *And Jehovah will appear above them, and like the lightning will His arrow go forth; and the Lord Jehovah will blow the trumpets, and will pass along in storms of the south.* Ver. 15. *Jehovah of hosts will shelter above them, and they will eat and tread down sling-stones, and will drink, make a noise, as if with wine, and become full; like the sacrificial bowls, like the corners of the altar.*" The double recompense which the Lord will make to His people, will consist in the fact that He not only liberates them out of captivity and bondage, and makes them into an independent nation, but that He helps them to victory over the power of the world, so that they will tread it down, *i.e.* completely subdue it. The first thought is not explained more fully, because it is contained *implicite* in the promise of return to a strong place; the "double" only is more distinctly defined, namely, the victory over Javan. The expression, "I stretch," etc., implies that the Lord will subdue

the enemies by Judah and Ephraim, and therefore Israel will carry on this conflict in the power of its God. The figurative description is a bold one. Judah is the extended bow; Ephraim the arrow which God shoots at the foe. קֶשֶׁת is indeed separated from יְהוּדָה by the accents; but the LXX., Targ., Vulg., and others, have taken it more correctly, as in apposition to יְהוּדָה; because with the many meanings that דֶּרֶךְ possesses, the expression דֶּרֶךְ יְהוּדָה needs a more precise definition; whereas there is no difficulty in supplying in thought the noun *qesheth*, which has been mentioned only just before, to the verb מִלֵּאתִי (I fill). מִלֵּאתִי is to be understood as signifying the laying of the arrow upon the bow, and not to be explained from 2 Kings ix. 24, "to fill the hand with the bow." A bow is filled when it is supplied with the arrow for shooting. We must bear in mind that the matter is divided rhetorically between the parallel members; and the thought is this: Judah and Ephraim are bow and arrow in the hand of Jehovah. עוֹרַרְתִּי, I stir up, not I swing thy children as a lance (Hitzig and Koehler); for if עוֹרֵר had this meaning, חֲנִית could not be omitted. The sons of Zion are Judah and Ephraim, the undivided Israel, not the Zionites living as slaves in Javan (Hitzig). The sons of Javan are the Greeks, as the world-power, the Græco-Macedonian monarchy (cf. Dan. viii. 21), against which the Lord will make His people into a hero's sword. This took place in weak beginnings, even in the wars between the Maccabees and the Seleucidæ, to which, according to Jerome, the Jews understood our prophecy to refer; but it must not be restricted to this, as the further description in vers. 14, 15 points to the complete subjugation of the imperial power. Jehovah appears above them, *i.e.* coming from heaven as a defence, to fight for them (the sons of Zion), as a mighty man of war (Ps. xxiv. 8). His arrow goes out like the lightning (כְּ the so-called כ *veritatis*; for the fact described, compare Hab. iii. 11). Marching at the head of His people, He gives the signal of battle with a trumpet-blast, and attacks the enemy with terribly devastating violence. The description rests upon the poetical descriptions of the coming of the Lord to judgment, the colours of which are borrowed from the phenomena of a storm (cf. Ps. xviii. and Hab. iii. 8 sqq.). Storms of the south are the most violent storms, as they come from the Arabian desert, which bounds Canaan on the

south (Isa. xxi. 1; cf. Hos. xiii. 15). But Jehovah not only fights for His people; He is also a shield to them in battle, covering them against the weapons of the foe. This is affirmed in יָגֵן עֲלֵיהֶם in ver. 15. Hence they are able to destroy their enemies, and, like devouring lions, to eat their flesh and drink their blood. That this figure lies at the foundation of the horrible picture of וְאָכְלוּ, is evident from Num. xxiii. 24, which was the passage that Zechariah had in his mind: "Behold a people like the lioness; it rises up, and like the lion does it lift itself up: it lies not down till it devour the prey, and drink the blood of the slain." Hence the object to אָכְלוּ is not the possessions of the heathen, but their flesh. כָּבְשׁוּ אַבְנֵי קָלַע does not mean, they tread down (subdue) the enemy with sling-stones (LXX., Vulg., Grot.); for אַבְנֵי ק׳ cannot, when considered grammatically, be taken in an instrumental sense, and is rather an *accus. obj.*; but they tread down sling-stones. The sling-stones might be used *per synecdochen* to signify darts, which the enemy hurls at them, and which they tread down as perfectly harmless (Kliefoth). But the comparison of the Israelites to the stones of a crown, in ver. 16, leads rather to the conclusion that the sling-stones are to be taken as a figure denoting the enemy, who are trampled under the feet like stones (Hitzig, Hengstenberg). Only we cannot speak of eating sling-stones, as Koehler would interpret the words, overlooking כָּבְשׁוּ, and appealing to the parallel member: they will drink, reel as if from wine, which shows, in his opinion, that it is the sling-stones that are to be eaten. But this shows, on the contrary, that just as there no mention is made of what is to be drunk, so here what is to be eaten is not stated. It is true that wine and sacrificial blood point to the blood of the enemy; but wine and blood are drinkable, whereas sling-stones are not edible. The description of the enemy as sling-stones is to be explained from the figure in 1 Sam. xxv. 29, to hurl away the soul of the enemy. They drunk (*sc.* the blood of the enemy) even to intoxication, making a noise, as if intoxicated with wine (כְּמוֹ יָיִן, an abbreviated comparison; cf. Ewald, § 221, *a*, and 282, *e*), and even to overflowing, so that they become full, like the sacrificial bowls in which the blood of the sacrificial animals was caught, and like the corners of the altar, which were sprinkled with the sacrificial blood. מִזְרָקוֹת are corners, not the horns of the altar.

The sacrificial blood was not sprinkled upon these; they were simply smeared with a little blood applied with the finger, in the case of the expiatory sacrifices. According to the law (Lev. i. 5, 11, iii. 2, etc.), the blood was to be swung against the altar. This was done, according to rabbinical tradition (*Mishn. Seb.* v. 4 sqq., and Rashi on Lev. i. 5), in such a manner, that with two sprinklings all the four sides of the altar were wetted,—a result which could only be ensured by swinging the bowls filled with blood, so as to strike the corners of the altar.

Through this victory over the world-power Israel will attain to glory. Ver. 16. "*And Jehovah their God will endow them with salvation in that day, like a flock His people; for stones of a crown are they, sparkling in His land.* Ver. 17. *For how great is its goodness, and how great its beauty! Corn will make youths to sprout, and new wine maidens.*" הוֹשִׁיעַ does not mean to help or deliver here; for this would affirm much too little, after what has gone before. When Israel has trodden down its foes, it no longer needs deliverance. It denotes the granting of positive salvation, which the explanatory clause that follows also requires. The motive for this is indicated in the clause, "like a flock His people." Because Israel is His (Jehovah's) people, the Lord will tend it as a shepherd tends his flock. The blessings which Jehovah bestows upon His people are described by David in Ps. xxiii. The Lord will do this also, because they (the Israelites) are crown-stones, namely as the chosen people, which Jehovah will make a praise and glory for all nations (Zeph. iii. 19, 20). To the predicate אַבְנֵי נֵזֶר the subject הֵמָּה may easily be supplied from the context, as for example in מַנִּיר in ver. 12. To this subject מִתְנוֹסְסוֹת וגו׳ attaches itself. This verb is connected with *nēs*, a banner, in Ps. lx. 6, the only other passage in which it occurs; but here it is used in the sense of *nâtsats*, to glitter or sparkle. The meaning, to lift up, which is given by the lexicons, has no foundation, and is quite unsuitable here. For crown-stones do not lift themselves up, but sparkle; and the figure of precious stones, which sparkle upon the land, denotes the highest possible glory to which Israel can attain. The suffix attached to אַדְמָתוֹ refers to *Jehovah*, only we must not identify the land of Jehovah with Palestine. The application of this honourable epithet to Israel is justified in ver. 17,

by an allusion to the excellence and beauty to which it will attain. The suffixes in טוּבוֹ and יָפְיוֹ cannot refer to *Jehovah*, as Ewald and Hengstenberg suppose, but refer to עַמּוֹ, the people of Jehovah. יֹפִי is quite irreconcilable with an allusion to Jehovah, since this word only occurs in connection with men and the Messianic King (Ps. xlv. 3; Isa. xxxiii. 17); and even if it were used of Jehovah, it would still be unsuitable here. For though the vigorous prosperity of the nation is indeed a proof of the goodness of God, it is not a proof of the beauty of God. *Mâh* is an exclamation of amazement: "how great!" (Ewald, § 330, *a*). טוּב, when affirmed of the nation, is not moral goodness, but a good appearance, and is synonymous with יֹפִי, beauty, as in Hos. x. 11. This prosperity proceeds from the blessings of grace, which the Lord causes to flow down to His people. Corn and new wine are mentioned as such blessings, for the purpose of individualizing, as indeed they frequently are (*e.g.* Deut. xxxiii. 28; Ps. lxxii. 16), and are distributed rhetorically between the youths and the maidens.

Chap. x. COMPLETE REDEMPTION OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD.—This chapter contains no new promise, but simply a further expansion of the previous section, the condition on which salvation is to be obtained being mentioned in the introduction (vers. 1 and 2); whilst subsequently, more especially from ver. 6 onwards, the participation of Ephraim in the salvation in prospect is more elaborately treated of. The question in dispute among the commentators, viz. whether vers. 1 and 2 are to be connected with the previous chapter, so as to form the conclusion, or whether they form the commencement of a new address, or new turn in the address, is to be answered thus: The prayer for rain (ver. 1) is indeed occasioned by the concluding thought in ch. ix. 17, but it is not to be connected with the preceding chapter as though it were an integral part of it, inasmuch as the second hemistich of ver. 2 can only be separated with violence from ver. 3. The close connection between ver. 2*b* and ver. 3 shows that ver. 1 commences a new train of thought, for which preparation is made, however, by ch. ix. 17.

Ver. 1. "*Ask ye of Jehovah rain in the time of the latter rain; Jehovah createth lightnings, and showers of rain will He give them, to every one vegetation in the field.* Ver. 2. *For the*

teraphim have spoken vanity, and the soothsayers have seen a lie, and speak dreams of deceit; they comfort in vain: for this they have wandered like a flock, they are oppressed because there is no shepherd." The summons to prayer is not a mere turn of the address expressing the readiness of God to give (Hengstenberg), but is seriously meant, as the reason assigned in ver. 2 clearly shows. The church of the Lord is to ask of God the blessings which it needs for its prosperity, and not to put its trust in idols, as rebellious Israel has done (Hos. ii. 7). The prayer for rain, on which the successful cultivation of the fruits of the ground depends, simply serves to individualize the prayer for the bestowal of the blessings of God, in order to sustain both temporal and spiritual life; just as in ch. ix. 17 the fruitfulness of the land and the flourishing of the nation are simply a concrete expression, for the whole complex of the salvation which the Lord will grant to His people (Kliefoth). This view, which answers to the rhetorical character of the exhortation, is very different from allegory. The time of the latter rain is mentioned, because this was indispensable to the ripening of the corn, whereas elsewhere the early and latter rain are connected together (*e.g.* Joel ii. 23; Deut. xi. 13–15). The lightnings are introduced as the harbingers of rain (cf. Jer. x. 13; Ps. cxxxv. 7). *Mᶜtar geshem*, rain of the rain-pouring, *i.e.* copious rain (compare Job xxxvii. 6, where the words are transposed). With *lâhem* (to them) the address passes into the third person: to them, *i.e.* to every one who asks. עֵשֶׂב is not to be restricted to grass or herb as the food of cattle, as in Deut. xi. 15, where it is mentioned in connection with the corn and the fruits of the field; but it includes these, as in Gen. i. 29 and Ps. civ. 14, where it is distinguished from *châtsîr*. The exhortation to pray to Jehovah for the blessing needed to ensure prosperity, is supported in ver. 2 by an allusion to the worthlessness of the trust in idols, and to the misery which idolatry with its consequences, viz. soothsaying and false prophecy, have brought upon the nation. The *t'râphîm* were house-deities and oracular deities, which were worshipped as the givers and protectors of the blessings of earthly prosperity (see at Gen. xxxi. 19). Along with these קוֹסְמִים are mentioned, *i.e.* the soothsayers, who plunged the nation into misery through their vain and deceitful prophesyings. חֲלֹמוֹת is not the subject

of the sentence, for in that case it would have the article like הַקּוֹסְמִים; but it is the object, and קוֹסְמִים is also the subject to יִרְבְּרוּ and יִנָּחֲמוּ. "Therefore," *i.e.* because Israel had trusted in teraphim and soothsayers, it would have to wander into exile. נָסַע, to break up, applied to the pulling up of the pegs, to take down the tent, involves the idea of wandering, and in this connection, of wandering into exile. Hence the perfect נָסְעוּ, to which the imperfect יָעֻנּוּ is suitably appended, because their being oppressed, *i.e.* the oppression which Israel suffered from the heathen, still continued. The words apply of course to all Israel (Ephraim and Judah); compare ch. ix. 13 with ch. x. 4, 6. Israel is bowed down because it has no shepherd, *i.e.* no king, who guards and provides for his people (cf. Num. xxvii. 17; Jer. xxiii. 4), having lost the Davidic monarchy when the kingdom was overthrown.

To this there is appended in vers. 3 sqq. the promise that Jehovah will take possession of His flock, and redeem it out of the oppression of the evil shepherds. Ver. 3. "*My wrath is kindled upon the shepherds, and the goats shall I punish; for Jehovah of hosts visits His flock, the house of Judah, and makes it like His state-horse in the war.* Ver. 4. *From Him will be corner-stone, from Him the nail, from Him the war-bow; from Him will every ruler go forth at once.*" When Israel lost its own shepherds, it came under the tyranny of bad shepherds. These were the heathen governors and tyrants. Against these the wrath of Jehovah is kindled, and He will punish them. There is no material difference between רֹעִים, shepherds, and עַתּוּדִים, leading goats. *'Attūdīm* also signifies rulers, as in Isa. xiv. 9. The reason assigned why the evil shepherds are to be punished, is that Jehovah visits His flock. The perfect *pâqad* is used prophetically of what God has resolved to do, and will actually carry out; and *pâqad c. acc. pers.* means to visit, *i.e.* to assume the care of, as distinguished from *pâqad* with *'al pers.*, to visit in the sense of to punish (see at Zeph. ii. 7). The house of Judah only is mentioned in ver. 3, not in distinction from Ephraim, however (cf. ver. 6), but as the stem and kernel of the covenant nation, with which Ephraim is to be united once more. The care of God for Judah will not be limited to its liberation from the oppression of the bad shepherds; but Jehovah will also make Judah into a victorious people. This is the meaning of

the figure "like a state-horse," *i.e.* a splendid and richly ornamented war-horse, such as a king is accustomed to ride. This figure is not more striking than the description of Judah and Ephraim as a bow and arrow (ch. ix. 13). This equipment of Judah as a warlike power overcoming its foes is described in ver. 4, namely in 4*a*, in figures taken from the firmness and furnishing of a house with everything requisite, and in 4*b*, etc., in literal words. The verb יֵצֵא of the fourth clause cannot be taken as the verb belonging to the מִמֶּנּוּ in the first three clauses, because יֵצֵא is neither applicable to *pinnâh* nor to *yâthēd*. We have therefore to supply יִהְיֶה. From (out of) Him will be *pinnâh*, corner, here corner-stone, as in Isa. xxviii. 16, upon which the whole building stands firmly, and will be built securely,—a suitable figure for the firm, stately foundation which Judah is to receive. To this is added *yâthēd*, the plug. This figure is to be explained from the arrangement of eastern houses, in which the inner walls are provided with a row of large nails or plugs for hanging the house utensils upon. The plug, therefore, is a suitable figure for the supports or upholders of the whole political constitution, and even in Isa. xxii. 23 was transferred to persons. The war-bow stands synecdochically for weapons of war and the military power. It is a disputed point, however, whether the suffix in *mimmennū* (out of him) refers to *Judah* or *Jehovah*. But the opinion of Hitzig and others, that it refers to Jehovah, is overthrown by the expression יֵצֵא מִמֶּנּוּ in the last clause. For even if we could say, Judah will receive its firm foundation, its internal fortification, and its military strength from *Jehovah*, the expression, "Every military commander will go out or come forth out of Jehovah," is unheard-of and unscriptural. It is not affirmed in the Old Testament even of the Messiah that He goes forth out of God, although His "goings forth" are from eternity (Mic. v. 1), and He Himself is called *El gibbōr* (Isa. ix. 5). Still less can this be affirmed of *every* ruler (*kol-nōgēs*) of Judah. In this clause, therefore, *mimmennū* must refer to Judah, and consequently it must be taken in the same way in the first three clauses. On יֵצֵא מִן, see Mic. v. 1. *Nōgēs*, an oppressor or taskmaster, is not applied to a leader or ruler in a good sense even here, any more than in Isa. iii. 12 and lx. 17 (see the comm. on these passages). The fact that

negus in Ethiopic is the name given to the king (Koehler), proves nothing in relation to Hebrew usage. The word has the subordinate idea of oppressor, or despotic ruler, in this instance also; but the idea of harshness refers not to the covenant nation, but to its enemies (Hengstenberg), and the words are used in antithesis to ch. ix. 8. Whereas there the promise is given to the nation of Israel that it will not fall under the power of the *nōgēs* any more, it is here assured that it is to attain to the position of a *nōgēs* in relation to its foes (Kliefoth). כָּל־נוֹגֵשׂ is strengthened by יִהְיוּ: every oppressor together, which Judah will require in opposition to its foes.

Thus equipped for battle, Judah will annihilate its foes. Ver. 5. "*And they will be like heroes, treading street-mire in the battle: and will fight, for Jehovah is with them, and the riders upon horses are put to shame.* Ver. 6. *And I shall strengthen the house of Judah, and grant salvation to the house of Joseph, and shall make them dwell; for I have had compassion upon them: and they will be as if I had not rejected them; for I am Jehovah their God, and will hear them.* Ver. 7. *And Ephraim will be like a hero, and their heart will rejoice as if with wine: and their children will see it, and rejoice; their heart shall rejoice in Jehovah.*" In ver. 5, *bōsīm* is a more precise definition of *k*ᵉ*gibbōrīm*, and the house of Judah (ver. 3) is the subject of the sentence. They will be like heroes, namely, treading upon mire. *Bōsīm* is the *kal* participle used in an intransitive sense, since the form with *o* only occurs in verbs with an intransitive meaning, like *bōsh*, *lōt*, *qōm*; and *būs* in *kal* is construed in every other case with the accusative of the object: treading upon mire = treading or treading down mire. Consequently the object which they tread down or trample in pieces is expressed by בְּטִיט חוּצוֹת; and thus the arbitrary completion of the sentence by "everything that opposes them" (C. B. Mich. and Koehler) is set aside as untenable. Now, as "treading upon mire" cannot possibly express merely the firm tread of a courageous man (Hitzig), we must take the dirt of the streets as a figurative expression for the enemy, and the phrase "treading upon street-mire" as a bold figure denoting the trampling down of the enemy in the mire of the streets (Mic. vii. 10; 2 Sam. xxii. 43), analogous to their "treading down sling-stones," ch. ix. 15. For such heroic conflict will they be

fitted by the help of Jehovah, that the enemy will be put to shame before them. The riders of the horses are mentioned for the purpose of individualizing the enemy, because the principal strength of the Asiatic rulers consisted in cavalry (see Dan. xi. 40). הוֹבִישׁ intransitive, as in ch. ix. 5. This strength for a victorious conflict will not be confined to Judah, but Ephraim will also share it. The words, "and the house of Ephraim will I endow with salvation," have been taken by Koehler as signifying "that Jehovah will deliver the house of Ephraim by granting the victory to the house of Judah in conflict with its own foes and those of Ephraim also;" but there is no ground for this. We may see from ver. 7, according to which Ephraim will also fight as a hero, as Judah will according to ver. 5, that הוֹשִׁיעַ does not mean merely to help or deliver, but to grant salvation, as in ch. ix. 16. The circumstance, however, "that in the course of the chapter, at any rate from ver. 7 onwards, it is only Ephraim whose deliverance and restoration are spoken of," proves nothing more than that Ephraim will receive the same salvation as Judah, but not that it will be delivered by the house of Judah. The abnormal form הוֹשְׁבוֹתִים is regarded by many, who follow Kimchi and Aben Ezra, as a *forma composita* from הוֹשְׁבֹתִים and הֲשִׁיבוֹתִי: "I make them dwell, and bring them back." But this is precluded by the fact that the bringing back would necessarily precede the making to dwell, to say nothing of the circumstance that there is no analogy whatever for such a composition (cf. Jer. xxxii. 37). The form is rather to be explained from a confusion of the verbs ע״ע and פ״י, and is the *hiphil* of יָשַׁב for הוֹשְׁבֹתִים (LXX., Maurer, Hengstenberg; comp. Olshausen, *Grammat.* p. 559), and not a *hiphil* of שׁוּב, in which a transition has taken place into the *hiphil* form of the verbs פ״י (Ewald, § 196, *b*, Not. 1; Targ., Vulg., Hitzig, and Koehler). For "bringing back" affirms too little here. הוֹשְׁבֹתִים, "I make them dwell," corresponds rather to "they shall be as if they had not been cast off," without needing any further definition, since not only do we meet with יָשַׁב without anything else, in the sense of peaceful, happy dwelling (*e.g.* Mic. v. 3), but here also the manner of dwelling is indicated in the appended clause כַּאֲשֶׁר לֹא־זְנַחְתִּים, "as before they were cast off" (cf. Ezek. xxxvi. 11). אֲעֵנֵם is also not to be taken as

referring to the answering of the prayers, which Ephraim addressed to Jehovah out of its distress, out of its imprisonment (Koehler), but is to be taken in a much more general sense, as in ch. xiii. 9, Isa. lviii. 9, and Hos. ii. 23. Ephraim, like Judah, will also become a hero, and rejoice as if with wine, *i.e.* fight joyfully like a hero strengthened with wine (cf. Ps. lxxviii. 65, 66). This rejoicing in conflict the sons will see, and exult in consequence; so that it will be a lasting joy.

In order to remove all doubt as to the realization of this promise, the deliverance of Ephraim is described still more minutely in vers. 8–12. Ver. 8. "*I will hiss to them, and gather them; for I have redeemed them: and they will multiply as they have multiplied.* Ver. 9. *And I will sow them among the nations: and in the far-off lands will they remember me; and will live with their sons, and return.* Ver. 10. *And I will bring them back out of the land of Egypt, and gather them out of Asshur, and bring them into the land of Gilead and of Lebanon; and room will not be found for them.*" That these verses do not treat of a fresh (second) dispersion of Ephraim, or represent the carrying away as still in the future (Hitzig), is evident from the words themselves, when correctly interpreted. Not only are the enticing and gathering together (ver. 8) mentioned before the sowing or dispersing (ver. 9), but they are both expressed by similar verbal forms (אֶשְׁרְקָה and אֲזָרֵעֵם); and the misinterpretation is thereby precluded, that events occurring at different times are referred to. We must also observe the voluntative form אֶשְׁרְקָה, "I will (not I shall) hiss to them, *i.e.* entice them" (*shâraq* being used for alluring, as in Isa. v. 26 and vii. 18), as well as the absence of a copula. They both show that the intention here is simply to explain with greater clearness what is announced in vers. 6, 7. The perfect פְּדִיתִים is prophetic, like רַחֲמֹתִים in ver. 6. The further promise, "they will multiply," etc., cannot be taken as referring either merely to the multiplication of Israel in exile (Hengst., Koehler, etc.), or merely to the future multiplication after the gathering together. According to the position in which the words stand between אֲקַבְּצֵם and אֲזָרֵעֵם, they must embrace both the multiplication during the dispersion, and the multiplication after the gathering together. The perfect כְּמוֹ רָבוּ points to the increase which Israel experienced in the olden time under the

oppression of Egypt (Ex. i. 7, 12). This increase, which is also promised in Ezek. xxxvi. 10, 11, is effected by God's sowing them broadcast among the nations. זָרַע does not mean to scatter, but to sow, to sow broadcast (see at Hos. ii. 25). Consequently the reference cannot be to a dispersion of Israel inflicted as a punishment. The sowing denotes the multiplication (cf. Jer. xxxi. 27), and is not to be interpreted, as Neumann and Kliefoth suppose, as signifying that the Ephraimites are to be scattered as seed-corn among the heathen, to spread the knowledge of Jehovah among the nations. This thought is quite foreign to the context; and even in the words, "in far-off lands will they remember me," it is neither expressed nor implied. These words are to be connected with what follows: Because they remember the Lord in far-off lands, they will live, and return with their children. In ver. 10*a* the gathering together and leading back of Israel are more minutely described, and indeed as taking place out of the land of Asshur and out of Egypt. The fact that these two lands are mentioned, upon which modern critics have principally founded their arguments in favour of the origin of this prophecy before the captivity, cannot be explained "from the circumstance that in the time of Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser many Ephraimites had fled to Egypt" (Koehler and others); for history knows nothing of this, and the supposition is merely a loophole for escaping from a difficulty. Such passages as Hos. viii. 13, ix. 3, 6, xi. 11, Mic. vii. 12, Isa. xi. 11, xxvii. 13, furnish no historical evidence of such thing. Even if certain Ephraimites had fled to Egypt, these could not be explained as relating to a return or gathering together of the Ephraimites or Israelites out of Egypt and Assyria, because the announcement presupposes that the Ephraimites had been transported to Egypt in quite as large numbers as to Assyria,—a fact which cannot be established either in relation to the times before or to those after the captivity. Egypt, as we have already shown at Hos. ix. 3 (cf. viii. 13), is rather introduced in all the passages mentioned simply as a type of the land of bondage, on account of its having been the land in which Israel lived in the olden time, under the oppression of the heathen world. And Asshur is introduced in the same way, as the land into which the ten

tribes had been afterwards exiled. This typical significance is placed beyond all doubt by ver. 11, since the redemption of Israel out of the countries named is there exhibited under the type of the liberation of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt under the guidance of Moses. (Compare also Delitzsch on Isa. xi. 11.) The Ephraimites are to return into the land of Gilead and Lebanon; the former representing the territory of the ten tribes in the olden time to the east of the Jordan, the latter that to the west (cf. Mic. vii. 14). לֹא יִמָּצֵא, there is not found for them, *sc.* the necessary room: equivalent to, it will not be sufficient for them (as in Josh. xvii. 16).

Ver. 11. "*And he goes through the sea of affliction, and smites the waves in the sea, and all the depths of the river dry up; and the pride of Asshur will be cast down, and the staff of Egypt will depart.* Ver. 12. *And I make them strong in Jehovah; and they will walk in His name, is the saying of Jehovah.*" The subject in ver. 11 is Jehovah. He goes, as once He went in the pillar of cloud as the angel of the Lord in the time of Moses, through the sea of affliction. צָרָה, which has been interpreted in very different ways, we take as in apposition to יָם, though not as a permutative, "through the sea, viz. the affliction" (C. B. Mich., Hengst.); but in this sense, "the sea, which caused distress or confinement," so that the simple reason why צָרָה is not connected with יָם in the construct state, but placed in apposition, is that the sea might not be described as a straitened sea, or sea of anxiety. This apposition points to the fact which floated before the prophet's mind, namely, that the Israelites under Moses were so confined by the Red Sea that they thought they were lost (Ex. xiv. 10 sqq.). The objection urged by Koehler against this view—namely, that צָרָה as a noun is not used in the sense of local strait or confinement—is proved to be unfounded by Jonah ii. 3 and Zeph. i. 15. All the other explanations of *tsârâh* are much more unnatural, being either unsuitable, like the suggestion of Koehler to take it as an exclamation, "O distress!" or grammatically untenable, like the rendering adopted by Maurer and Kliefoth, after the Chaldæan usage, "he splits." The smiting of the waves in the sea does indeed play upon the division of the waves of the sea when the Israelites passed through the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 16, 21; cf. Josh. iii. 13, Ps. lxxvii. 17, cxiv. 5);

but it affirms still more, as the following clause shows, namely, a binding or constraining of the waves, by which they are annihilated, or a drying up of the floods, like הַחֲרִים in Isa. xi. 15. Only the floods of the Nile (יְאוֹר) are mentioned, because the allusion to the slavery of Israel in Egypt predominates, and the redemption of the Israelites out of all the lands of the nations is represented as bringing out of the slave-house of Egypt. The drying up of the flood-depths of the Nile is therefore a figure denoting the casting down of the imperial power in all its historical forms; Asshur and Egypt being mentioned by name in the last clause answering to the declaration in ver. 10, and the tyranny of Asshur being characterized by גְּאוֹן, pride, haughtiness (cf. Isa. x. 7 sqq.), and that of Egypt by the rod of its taskmasters. In ver. 12 the promise for Ephraim is brought to a close with the general thought that they will obtain strength in the Lord, and walk in the power of His name. With וְנִבְרָתִים the address reverts to its starting-point in ver. 6. בַּיהוָה stands for בִּי, to point emphatically to the Lord, in whom Israel as the people of God had its strength. Walking in the name of Jehovah is to be taken as in Mic. iv. 5, and to be understood not as relating to the attitude of Israel towards God, or to the "self-attestation of Israel" (Koehler), but to the result, viz. walking in the strength of the Lord.

If, in conclusion, we survey the whole promise from ch. ix. 11 onwards, there are two leading thoughts developed in it: (*a*) That those members of the covenant nation who were still scattered among the heathen should be redeemed out of their misery, and gathered together in the kingdom of the King who was coming for Zion, *i.e.* of the Messiah; (*b*) That the Lord would endow all His people with power for the conquest of the heathen. They were both fulfilled, in weak commencements only, in the times immediately following and down to the coming of Christ, by the return of many Jews out of captivity and into the land of the fathers, particularly when Galilee was strongly peopled by Israelites; and also by the protection and care which God bestowed upon the people in the contests between the powers of the world for supremacy in Palestine. The principal fulfilment is of a spiritual kind, and was effected through the gathering of the Jews into the kingdom

of Christ, which commenced in the times of the apostles, and will continue till the remnant of Israel is converted to Christ its Saviour.

ISRAEL UNDER THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THE FOOLISH ONE.—CHAP. XI.

In the second half of the "burden" upon the world-power, which is contained in this chapter, the thought indicated in ch. x. 3—namely, that the wrath of Jehovah is kindled over the shepherds when He visits His flock, the house of Judah—is more elaborately developed, and an announcement is made of the manner in which the Lord visits His people, and rescues it out of the hands of the world-powers who are seeking to destroy it, and then, because it repays His pastoral fidelity with ingratitude, gives it up into the hands of the foolish shepherd, who will destroy it, but who will also fall under judgment himself in consequence. The picture sketched in ch. ix. 8–10, 12, of the future of Israel is thus completed, and enlarged by the description of the judgment accompanying the salvation; and through this addition an abuse of the proclamation of salvation is prevented. But in order to bring out into greater prominence the obverse side of the salvation, there is appended to the announcement of salvation in ch. x. the threat of judgment in vers. 1–3, without anything to explain the transition; and only after that is the attitude of the Lord towards His people and the heathen world, out of which the necessity for the judgment sprang, more fully described. Hence this chapter divides itself into three sections: viz. the threat of judgment (vers. 1–3); the description of the good shepherd (vers. 4–14); and the sketch of the foolish shepherd (vers. 15–17).

Vers. 1–3. THE DEVASTATION OF THE HOLY LAND.—Ver. 1. "*Open thy gates, O Lebanon, and let fire devour thy cedars!* Ver. 2. *Howl, cypress; for the cedar is fallen, for the glory is laid waste! Howl, ye oaks of Bashan; for the inaccessible forest is laid low!* Ver. 3. *A loud howling of the shepherds; for their glory is laid waste! A loud roaring of the young lions; for the splendour of Jordan is laid waste!*" That these verses do not form the commencement of a new prophecy, having no

connection with the previous one, but that they are simply a new turn given to that prophecy, is evident not only from the omission of any heading or of any indication whatever which could point to the commencement of a fresh word of God, but still more so from the fact that the allusion to Lebanon and Bashan and the thickets of Judah points back unmistakeably to the land of Gilead and of Lebanon (ch. x. 10), and shows a connection between ch. xi. and x., although this retrospect is not decided enough to lay a foundation for the view that vers. 1–3 form a conclusion to the prophecy in ch. x., to which their contents by no means apply. For let us interpret the figurative description in these verses in what manner we will, so much at any rate is clear, that they are of a threatening character, and as a threat not only form an antithesis to the announcement of salvation in ch. x., but are substantially connected with the destruction which will overtake the "flock of the slaughter," and therefore serve as a prelude, as it were, to the judgment announced in vers. 4–7. The undeniable relation in which Lebanon, Bashan, and the Jordan stand to the districts of Gilead and Lebanon, also gives us a clue to the explanation; since it shows that Lebanon, the northern frontier of the holy land, and Bashan, the northern part of the territory of the Israelites to the east of the Jordan, are synecdochical terms, denoting the holy land itself regarded in its two halves, and therefore that the cedars, cypresses, and oaks in these portions of the land cannot be figurative representations of heathen rulers (Targ., Eph. Syr., Kimchi, etc.); but if powerful men and tyrants are to be understood at all by these terms, the allusion can only be to the rulers and great men of the nation of Israel (Hitzig, Maurer, Hengst., Ewald, etc.). But this allegorical interpretation of the cedars, cypresses, and oaks, however old and widely spread it may be, is not so indisputable as that we could say with Kliefoth: "The words themselves do not allow of our finding an announcement of the devastation of the holy land therein." For even if the words themselves affirm nothing more than "that the very existence of the cedars, oaks, shepherds, lions, is in danger; and that if these should fall, Lebanon will give way to the fire, the forest of Bashan will fall, the thicket of Jordan be laid waste;" yet through the destruction of the cedars, oaks, etc., the soil on which these trees grow is also

devastated and laid waste. The picture is a dramatic one. Instead of the devastation of Lebanon being announced, it is summoned to open its gates, that the fire may be able to enter in and devour its cedars. The cypresses, which hold the second place among the celebrated woods of Lebanon, are then called upon to howl over the fall of the cedars, not so much from sympathy as because the same fate is awaiting them. The words אֲשֶׁר אַדִּירִים שֻׁדָּדוּ contain a second explanatory clause. אֲשֶׁר is a conjunction (for, because), as in Gen. xxx. 18, xxxi. 49. *'Addīrīm* are not the glorious or lofty ones among the people (Hengst., Kliefoth), but the glorious ones among the things spoken of in the context,—namely, the noble trees, the cedars and cypresses. The oaks of Bashan are also called upon to howl, because they too will fall like "the inaccessible forest," *i.e.* the cedar forest of Lebanon. The *keri habbâtsīr* is a needless correction, because the article does not compel us to take the word as a substantive. If the adjective is really a participle, the article is generally attached to it alone, and omitted from the noun (cf. Ges. § 111, 2, *a*). קוֹל יְלָלַת, voice of howling, equivalent to a loud howling. The shepherds howl, because *'addartâm*, their glory, is laid waste. We are not to understand by this their flock, but their pasture, as the parallel member גְּאוֹן הַיַּרְדֵּן and the parallel passage Jer. xxv. 36 show, where the shepherds howl, because their pasture is destroyed. What the pasture, *i.e.* the good pasture ground of the land of Bashan, is to the shepherds, that is the pride of Jordan to the young lions,—namely, the thicket and reeds which grew so luxuriantly on the banks of the Jordan, and afforded so safe and convenient a lair for lions (cf. Jer. xii. 5, xlix. 19, l. 44). Ver. 3 announces in distinct terms a devastation of the soil or land. It follows from this that the cedars, cypresses, and oaks are not figures representing earthly rulers. No conclusive arguments can be adduced in support of such an allegory. It is true that in Isa. x. 34 the powerful army of Assyria is compared to Lebanon; and in Jer. xxii. 6 the head of the cedar forest is a symbol of the royal house of Judah; and that in Jer. xxii. 23 it is used as a figurative term for Jerusalem (see at Hab. ii. 17); but neither men generally, nor individual earthly rulers in particular, are represented as cedars or oaks. The cedars and cypresses of

Lebanon and the oaks of Bashan are simply figures denoting what is lofty, glorious, and powerful in the world of nature and humanity, and are only to be referred to persons so far as their lofty position in the state is concerned. Consequently we get the following as the thought of these verses: The land of Israel, with all its powerful and glorious creatures, is to become desolate. Now, inasmuch as the desolation of a land also involves the desolation of the people living in the land, and of its institutions, the destruction of the cedars, cypresses, etc., does include the destruction of everything lofty and exalted in the nation and kingdom; so that in this sense the devastation of Lebanon is a figurative representation of the destruction of the Israelitish kingdom, or of the dissolution of the political existence of the ancient covenant nation. This judgment was executed upon the land and people of Israel by the imperial power of Rome. This historical reference is evident from the description which follows of the facts by which this catastrophe is brought to pass.

Vers. 4–14. This section contains a symbolical act. By the command of Jehovah the prophet assumes the office of a shepherd over the flock, and feeds it, until he is compelled by its ingratitude to break his shepherd's staff, and give up the flock to destruction. This symbolical act is not a poetical fiction, but is to be regarded in strict accordance with the words, as an internal occurrence of a visionary character and of prophetical importance, through which the faithful care of the Lord for His people is symbolized and exhibited. Ver. 4. "*Thus said Jehovah my God: Feed the slaughtering-flock;* Ver. 5. *whose purchasers slay them, and bear no blame, and their sellers say, Blessed be Jehovah! I am getting rich, and their shepherds spare them not.* Ver. 6. *For I shall no more spare the inhabitants of the earth, is the saying of Jehovah; and behold I cause the men to fall into one another's hands, and into the king's hand; and they will smite the land, and I shall not deliver out of their hand.*" The person who receives the commission to feed the flock is the prophet. This is apparent, both from the expression "my God" (ver. 5, comp. with vers. 7 sqq.), and also from ver. 15, according to which he is to take the instruments of a foolish shepherd. This latter verse also shows clearly enough, that the prophet does not come forward here as performing these acts in

his own person, but that he represents another, who does things in vers. 8, 12, and 13, which in truth neither Zechariah nor any other prophet ever did, but only God through His Son, and that in ver. 10 He is identified with God, inasmuch as here the person who breaks the staff is the prophet, and the person who has made the covenant with the nations is God. These statements are irreconcilable, both with Hofmann's assumption, that in this symbolical transaction Zechariah represents the prophetic office, and with that of Koehler, that he represents the mediatorial office. For apart from the fact that such abstract notions are foreign to the prophet's announcement, these assumptions are overthrown by the fact that neither the prophetic office nor the mediatorial office can be identified with God, and also that the work which the prophet carries out in what follows was not accomplished through the prophetic office. "The destruction of the three shepherds, or world-powers (ver. 8), is not effected through the prophetic word or office; and the fourth shepherd (ver. 15) is not instituted through the prophetic office and word" (Kliefoth). The shepherd depicted by the prophet can only be Jehovah Himself, or the angel of Jehovah, who is equal in nature to Himself, *i.e.* the Messiah. But since the angel of Jehovah, who appears in the visions, is not mentioned in our oracle, and as the coming of the Messiah is also announced elsewhere as the coming of Jehovah to His people, we shall have in this instance also to understand Jehovah Himself by the shepherd represented in the prophet. He visits His flock, as it is stated in ch. x. 3 and Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12, and assumes the care of them. The distinction between the prophet and Jehovah cannot be adduced as an argument against this; for it really belongs to the symbolical representation of the matter, according to which God commissions the prophet to do what He Himself intends to do, and will surely accomplish. The more precise definition of what is here done depends upon the answer to be given to the question, Who are the slaughtering flock, which the prophet undertakes to feed? Does it denote the whole of the human race, as Hofmann supposes; or the nation of Israel, as is assumed by the majority of commentators? צֹאן הַהֲרֵגָה, flock of slaughtering, is an expression that may be applied either to a flock that is being slaughtered, or to one that is destined to be slaughtered in the future. In

support of the latter sense, Kliefoth argues that so long as the sheep are being fed, they cannot have been already slaughtered, or be even in process of slaughtering, and that ver. 6 expressly states, that the men who are intended by the flock of slaughtering will be slaughtered in future when the time of sparing is over, or be treated in the manner described in ver. 5. But the first of these arguments proves nothing at all, inasmuch as, although feeding is of course not equivalent to slaughtering, a flock that is being slaughtered by its owners might be transferred to another shepherd to be fed, so as to rescue it from the caprice of its masters. The second argument rests upon the erroneous assumption that יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ in ver. 6 is identical with the slaughtering flock. The epithet צֹאן הַהֲרֵגָה, *i.e.* lit. flock of strangling—as *hârag* does not mean to slay, but to strangle—is explained in ver. 5. The flock is so called, because its present masters are strangling it, without bearing guilt, to sell it for the purpose of enriching themselves, and its shepherds treat it in an unsparing manner; and ver. 6 does not give the reason why the flock is called the flock of strangling or of slaughtering (as Kliefoth supposes), but the reason why it is given up by Jehovah to the prophet to feed. לֹא יֶאְשָׁמוּ does not affirm that those who are strangling it do not think themselves to blame—this is expressed in a different manner (cf. Jer. l. 7): nor that they do not actually incur guilt in consequence, or do not repent of it; for Jehovah transfers the flock to the prophet to feed, because He does not wish its possessors to go on strangling it, and אָשַׁם never has the meaning, to repent. לֹא יֶאְשָׁמוּ refers rather to the fact that these men have hitherto gone unpunished, that they still continue to prosper. So that *'âshēm* means to bear or expiate the guilt, as in Hos. v. 15, xiv. 1 (Ges., Hitzig, Ewald, etc.). What follows also agrees with this,—namely, that the sellers have only their own advantage in view, and thank God that they have thereby become rich. The singular יֹאמַר is used distributively: every one of them says so. וְאַעְשֶׁר, a syncopated form for וְאֶעְשַׁר (Ewald, § 73, *b*), and ו expressing the consequence, that I enrich myself (cf. Ewald, § 235, *b*). רֹעֵיהֶם are the former shepherds. The imperfects are not futures, but express the manner in which the flock was accustomed to be treated at the time when the prophet undertook to feed it. Jehovah will put an end to this capricious

treatment of the flock, by commanding the prophet to feed it. The reason for this He assigns in ver. 6: For I shall not spare the inhabitants of the earth any longer. יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ cannot be the inhabitants of the land, *i.e.* those who are described as the "flock of slaughtering" in ver. 4; for in that case "feeding" would be equivalent to slaughtering, or making ready for slaughtering. But although a flock is eventually destined for slaughtering, it is not fed for this purpose only, but generally to yield profit to its owner. Moreover, the figure of feeding is never used in the Scriptures in the sense of making ready for destruction, but always denotes fostering and affectionate care for the preservation of anything; and in the case before us, the shepherd feeds the flock entrusted to him, by slaying the three bad shepherds; and it is not till the flock has become weary of his tending that he breaks the shepherd's staves, and lays down his pastoral office, to give them up to destruction. Consequently the יֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ are different from the צֹאן הַהֲרֵגָה, and are those in the midst of whom the flock is living, or in whose possession and power it is. They cannot be the inhabitants of a land, however, but since they have kings (in the plural), as the expression "every one into the hand of his king" clearly shows, the inhabitants of the earth, or the world-powers; from which it also follows that the "flock of slaughtering" is not the human race, but the people of Israel, as we may clearly see from what follows, especially from vers. 11–14. Israel was given up by Jehovah into the hands of the nations of the world, or the imperial powers, to punish it for its sin. But as these nations abused the power entrusted to them, and sought utterly to destroy the nation of God, which they ought only to have chastised, the Lord takes charge of His people as their shepherd, because He will no longer spare the nations of the world, *i.e.* will not any longer let them deal with His people at pleasure, without being punished. The termination of the sparing will show itself in the fact that God causes the nations to destroy themselves by civil wars, and to be smitten by tyrannical kings. הַמְצִיא בְיַד ר׳, to cause to fall into the hand of another, *i.e.* to deliver up to his power (cf. 2 Sam. iii. 8). הָאָדָם is the human race; and מַלְכּוֹ, the king of each, is the king to whom each is subject. The subject of בִּתְּתוּ is רֵעֵהוּ and מַלְכּוֹ, the men and the kings who tyrannize over the others. These

smite them in pieces, *i.e.* devastate the earth by civil war and tyranny, without any interposition on the part of God to rescue the inhabitants of the earth, or nations beyond the limits of Israel, out of their hand, or to put any restraint upon tyranny and self-destruction.

From ver. 7 onwards the feeding of the flock is described. Ver. 7. "*And I fed the slaughtering flock, therewith the wretched ones of the sheep, and took to myself two staves: the one I called Favour, the other I called Bands; and so I fed the flock.* Ver. 8*a*. *And I destroyed three of the shepherds in one month.*" The difficult expression לָכֵן, of which very different renderings have been given (lit. with the so-being), is evidently used here in the same sense as in Isa. xxvi. 14, lxi. 7, Jer. ii. 33, etc., so as to introduce what occurred *eo ipso* along with the other event which took place. When the shepherd fed the slaughtering flock, he thereby, or at the same time, fed the wretched ones of the sheep. עֲנִיֵּי הַצֹּאן, not the most wretched of the sheep, but the wretched ones among the sheep, like צְעִירֵי הַצֹּאן in Jer. xlix. 20, l. 45, the small, weak sheep. עֲנִיֵּי הַצֹּאן therefore form one portion of the צֹאן הַהֲרֵגָה, as Hofmann and Kliefoth have correctly explained; whereas, if they were identical, the whole of the appended clause would be very tautological, since the thought that the flock was in a miserable state was already expressed clearly enough in the predicate הֲרֵגָה, and the explanation of it in ver. 5. This view is confirmed by ver. 11, where עֲנִיֵּי הַצֹּאן is generally admitted to be simply one portion of the flock. To feed the flock, the prophet takes two shepherds' staves, to which he gives names, intended to point to the blessings which the flock receives through his pastoral activity. The fact that he takes two staves does not arise from the circumstance that the flock consists of two portions, and cannot be understood as signifying that he feeds one portion of the flock with the one staff, and the other portion with the other. According to ver. 7, he feeds the whole flock with the first staff; and the destruction to which, according to ver. 9, it is to be given up when he relinquishes his office, is only made fully apparent when the two staves are broken. The prophet takes two staves for the simple purpose of setting forth the double kind of salvation which is bestowed upon the nation through the care of the good shepherd. The first staff he calls נֹעַם, *i.e.*

loveliness, and also favour (cf. Ps. xc. 17, נֹעַם יְהוָה). It is in the latter sense that the word is used here; for the shepherd's staff shows what Jehovah will thereby bestow upon His people. The second staff he calls חֹבְלִים, which is in any case a *kal* participle of חָבַל. Of the two certain meanings which this verb has in the *kal*, viz. to bind (hence *chebhel*, a cord or rope) and to ill-treat (cf. Job xxxiv. 31), the second, upon which the rendering staff-woe is founded, does not suit the explanation which is given in ver. 14 of the breaking of this staff. The first is the only suitable one, viz. the binding ones, equivalent to the bandage or connection. Through the staff *nō'am* (Favour), the favour of God, which protects it from being injured by the heathen nations, is granted to the flock (ver. 10); and through the staff *chōbhᵉlīm* the wretched sheep receive the blessing of fraternal unity or binding (ver. 14). The repetition of the words וְאֶרְעָה אֶת־הַצֹּאן (end of ver. 7) expresses the idea that the feeding is effected with both staves. The first thing which the shepherd appointed by God does for the flock is, according to ver. 8, to destroy three shepherds. הַכְחִיד, the *hiphil* of כָּחַד, signifies *ἀφανίζειν*, to annihilate, to destroy (as in Ex. xxiii. 23). אֶת־שְׁלֹשֶׁת הָרֹעִים may be rendered, the three shepherds (*τοὺς τρεῖς ποιμένας*, LXX.), or three of the shepherds, so that the article only refers to the genitive, as in Ex. xxvi. 3, 9, Josh. xvii. 11, 1 Sam. xx. 20, Isa. xxx. 26, and as is also frequently the case when two nouns are connected together in the construct state (see Ges. § 111, Anm.). We agree with Koehler in regarding the latter as the only admissible rendering here, because in what precedes shepherds only have been spoken of, and not any definite number of them. The shepherds, of whom three are destroyed, are those who strangled the flock according to ver. 5, and who are therefore destroyed in order to liberate the flock from their tyranny. But who are these three shepherds? It was a very widespread and ancient opinion, and one which we meet with in Theodoret, Cyril, and Jerome, that the three classes of Jewish rulers are intended,—namely, princes (or kings), priests, and prophets. But apart from the fact that in the times after the captivity, to which our prophecy refers, prophesying and the prophetic office were extinct, and that in the vision in ch. iv. 14 Zechariah only mentions two classes in the covenant nation who were repre-

sented by the prince Zerubbabel and the high priest Joshua; apart, I say, from this, such a view is irreconcilable with the words themselves, inasmuch as it requires us to dilute the destruction into a deposition from office, or, strictly speaking, into a counteraction of their influence upon the people; and this is quite sufficient to overthrow it. What Hengstenberg says in vindication of it—namely, that "an actual extermination cannot be intended, because the shepherds appear immediately afterwards as still in existence"—is founded upon a false interpretation of the second half of the verse. So much is unquestionably correct, that we have not to think of the extermination or slaying of three particular individuals,[1] and that not so much because it cannot be shown that three rulers or heads of the nation were ever destroyed in the space of a month, either in the times before the captivity or in those which followed, as because the persons occurring in this vision are not individuals, but classes of men. As the רֹעִים mentioned in ver. 5 as not sparing the flock are to be understood as signifying heathen rulers, so here the three shepherds are heathen liege-lords of the covenant nation. Moreover, as it is unanimously acknowledged by modern commentators that the definite number does not stand for an indefinite plurality, it is natural to think of the three imperial rulers into whose power Israel fell, that is to say, not of three rulers of one empire, but of the rulers of the three empires. The statement as to time, "in one month," which does not affirm that the three were shepherds within one month, as Hitzig supposes, but that the three shepherds were destroyed in one month, may easily be reconciled with this, if we only observe that, in a symbolical transaction, even the distinctions of time are intended to be interpreted symbolically. There can be no doubt whatever

[1] The attempts of rationalistic commentators to prove that the three shepherds are three kings of the kingdom of the ten tribes, have completely broken down, inasmuch as of the kings Zechariah, Shallum, and Menahem (2 Kings xv. 8–14), Shallum alone reigned an entire month, so that not even the ungrammatical explanation of Hitzig, to the effect that בְּיֶרַח אֶחָד refers to the reign of these kings, and not to their destruction, furnishes a sufficient loophole; whilst Maurer, Bleek, Ewald, and Bunsen felt driven to invent a third king or usurper, in order to carry out their view.

that "a month" signifies a comparatively brief space of time. At the same time, it is equally impossible to deny that the assumption that "in a month" is but another way of saying in a very short time, is not satisfactory, inasmuch as it would have been better to say "in a week," if this had been the meaning; and, on the other hand, a year would not have been a long time for the extermination of three shepherds. Nor can Hofmann's view be sustained,—namely, that the one month (= 30 days) is to be interpreted on the basis of Dan. ix. 24, as a prophetical period of $30 \times 7 = 210$ years, and that this definition of the time refers to the fact that the Babylonian, Medo-Persian, and Macedonian empires were destroyed within a period of 210 years. For there is no tenable ground for calculating the days of a month according to sabbatical periods, since there is no connection between the *yerach* of this verse and the שָׁבֻעִים of Daniel, to say nothing of the fact that the time which intervened between the conquest of Babylon and the death of Alexander the Great was not 210 years, but 215. The only way in which the expression "in one month" can be interpreted symbolically is that proposed by Kliefoth and Koehler,—namely, by dividing the month as a period of thirty days into three times ten days according to the number of the shepherds, and taking each ten days as the time employed in the destruction of a shepherd. Ten is the number of the completion or the perfection of any earthly act or occurrence. If, therefore, each shepherd was destroyed in ten days, and the destruction of the three was executed in a month, *i.e.* within a space of three times ten days following one another, the fact is indicated, on the one hand, that the destruction of each of these shepherds followed directly upon that of the other; and, on the other hand, that this took place after the full time allotted for his rule had passed away. The reason why the prophet does not say three times ten days, nor even thirty days, but connects the thirty days together into a month, is that he wishes not only to indicate that the time allotted for the duration of the three imperial monarchies is a brief one, but also to exhibit the unwearied activity of the shepherd, which is done more clearly by the expression "one month" than by "thirty days."

The description of the shepherd's activity is followed, from

ver. 8*b* onwards, by a description of the attitude which the flock assumed in relation to the service performed on its behalf. Ver. 8*b*. "*And my soul became impatient over them, and their soul also became weary of me.* Ver. 9. *Then I said, I will not feed you any more; what dieth may die, and what perisheth may perish; and those which remain may devour one another's flesh.* Ver. 10. *And I took my staff Favour, and broke it in pieces, to destroy my covenant which I had made with all nations.* Ver. 11. *And it was destroyed in that day; and so the wretched of the sheep, which gave heed to me, perceived that it was the word of Jehovah.*" The way in which ver. 8*a* and ver. 8*b* are connected in the Masoretic text, has led the earlier commentators, and even Hengstenberg, Ebrard, and Kliefoth, to take the statement in ver. 8*b* as also referring to the shepherds. But this is grammatically impossible, because the imperfect *c. Vav consec.* וַתִּקְצַר in this connection, in which the same verbal forms both before and after express the sequence both of time and thought, cannot be used in the sense of the pluperfect. And this is the sense in which it must be taken, if the words referred to the shepherds, because the prophet's becoming impatient with the shepherds, and the shepherds' dislike to the prophet, must of necessity have preceded the destruction of the shepherds. Again, it is evident from ver. 9, as even Hitzig admits, that the prophet "did not become disgusted with the three shepherds, but with his flock, which he resolved in his displeasure to leave to its fate." As the suffix אֹתָכֶם in ver. 9 is taken by all the commentators (except Kliefoth) as referring to the flock, the suffixes בָּהֶם and נַפְשָׁם in ver. 8 must also point back to the flock (הַצֹּאן, ver. 7). קָצְרָה נָפֶשׁ, to become impatient, as in Num. xxi. 4. בָּחַל, which only occurs again in Prov. xx. 21 in the sense of the Arabic بَخَلَ, to be covetous, is used here in the sense of the Syriac, to experience vexation or disgust. In consequence of the experience which the shepherd of the Lord had had, according to ver. 8*b*, he resolves to give up the feeding of the flock, and relinquish it to its fate, which is described in ver. 9*b* as that of perishing and destroying one another. The participles מֵתָה, נִכְחֶדֶת, and נִשְׁאָרוֹת are present participles, that which dies is destroyed (perishes) and remains; and the imperfects תָּמוּת, תִּכָּחֵד, and תֹּאכַלְנָה are not jussive, as the form

תָּמוּת clearly proves, but are expressive of that which can be or may happen (Ewald, § 136, *d*, *b*). As a sign of this, the shepherd breaks one staff in pieces, viz. the *nō'am*, to intimate that the good which the flock has hitherto received through this staff will be henceforth withdrawn from it; that is to say, that the covenant which God has made with all nations is to be repealed or destroyed. This covenant is not the covenant made with Noah as the progenitor of all men after the flood (Kliefoth), nor a relation entered into by Jehovah with all the nationalities under which each nationality prospered, inasmuch as the shepherd continued again and again to remove its flock-destroying shepherds out of the way (Hofmann, *Schriftbeweis*, ii. 2, p. 607). For in the covenant with Noah, although the continuance of this earth was promised, and the assurance given that there should be no repetition of a flood to destroy all living things, there was no guarantee of protection from death or destruction, or from civil wars; and history has no record of any covenant made by Jehovah with the nationalities, which secured to the nations prosperity on the one hand, or deliverance from oppressors on the other. The covenant made by God with all nations refers, according to the context of this passage, to a treaty made with them by God in favour of His flock the nation of Israel, and is analogous to the treaty made by God with the beasts, according to Hos. ii. 20, that they should not injure His people, and the treaty made with the stones and the beasts of the field (Job v. 23, cf. Ezek. xxxiv. 25). This covenant consisted in the fact that God imposed upon the nations of the earth the obligation not to hurt Israel or destroy it, and was one consequence of the favour of Jehovah towards His people. Through the abrogation of this covenant Israel is delivered up to the nations, that they may be able to deal with Israel again in the manner depicted in ver. 5. It is true that Israel is not thereby delivered up at once or immediately to that self-immolation which is threatened in ver. 9, nor is this threat carried into effect through the breaking in pieces of one staff, but is only to be fully realized when the second staff is broken, whereby the shepherd entirely relinquishes the feeding of the flock. So long as the shepherd continues to feed the flock with the other staff, so long will utter destruction be averted from it, although by the breaking of the staff Favour,

protection against the nations of the world is withdrawn from it. Ver. 11. From the abrogation of this covenant the wretched among the sheep perceived that this was Jehovah's word. כֵּן, so, *i.e.* in consequence of this. The wretched sheep are characterized as הַשֹּׁמְרִים אֹתִי, "those which give heed to me." אֹתִי refers to the prophet, who acts in the name of God, and therefore really to the act of God Himself. What is affirmed does not apply to one portion, but to all, עֲנִיֵּי הַצֹּאן, and proves that we are to understand by these the members of the covenant nation who give heed to the word of God. What these godly men recognised as the word of Jehovah, is evident from the context, viz. not merely the threat expressed in ver. 9, and embodied in the breaking of the staff Favour, but generally speaking the whole of the prophet's symbolical actions, including both the feeding of the flock with the staves, and the breaking of the one staff. The two together were an embodied word of Jehovah; and the fact that it was so was discerned, *i.e.* discovered by the righteous, from the effect produced upon Israel by the breaking of the staff Favour, *i.e.* from the consequences of the removal of the obligation imposed upon the heathen nations to do no hurt to Israel.

With the breaking of the staff Favour, the shepherd of the Lord has indeed withdrawn one side of his pastoral care from the flock that he had to feed, but his connection with it is not yet entirely dissolved. This takes place first of all in vers. 12–14, when the flock rewards him for his service with base ingratitude. Ver. 12. "*And I said to them, If it seem good to you, give me my wages; but if not, let it alone: and they weighed me as wages thirty silverlings.* Ver. 13. *Then Jehovah said to me, Throw it to the potter, the splendid price at which I am valued by them; and so I took the thirty silverlings, and threw it into the house of Jehovah to the potter.* Ver. 14. *And I broke my second staff Bands, to destroy the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.*" אֲלֵיהֶם (to them), so far as the grammatical construction is concerned, might be addressed to the wretched among the sheep, inasmuch as they were mentioned last. But when we bear in mind that the shepherd began to feed not only the wretched of the sheep, but the whole flock, and that he did not give up any one portion of the flock by breaking the staff Favour, we are forced to the conclusion that the words

are addressed to the whole flock, and that the demand for wages is only intended to give the flock an opportunity for explaining whether it is willing to acknowledge his feeding, and appreciate it rightly. The fact that the prophet asks for wages from the sheep may be explained very simply from the fact that the sheep represent men. The demand for wages is not to be understood as implying that the shepherd intended to lay down his office as soon as he had been paid for his service; for in that case he would have asked for the wages before breaking the first staff. But as he does not ask for it till afterwards, and leaves it to the sheep to say whether they are willing to give it or not ("if it seem good to you"), this demand cannot have any other object than to call upon the sheep to declare whether they acknowledge his service, and desire it to be continued. By the wages the commentators have very properly understood repentance and faith, or piety of heart, humble obedience, and heartfelt, grateful love. These are the only wages with which man can discharge his debt to God. They weighed him now as wages thirty shekels of silver (on the omission of *sheqel* or *keseph*, see Ges. § 120, 4, Anm. 2). "Thirty,"—not to reward him for the one month, or for thirty days—that is to say, to give him a shekel a day for his service (Hofm., Klief.): for, in the first place, it is not stated in ver. 8 that he did not feed them longer than a month; and secondly, a shekel was not such very small wages for a day's work, as the wages actually paid are represented as being in ver. 13. They rather pay him thirty shekels, with an allusion to the fact that this sum was the compensation for a slave that had been killed (Ex. xxi. 32), so that it was the price at which a bond-slave could be purchased (see at Hos. iii. 2). By paying thirty shekels, they therefore gave him to understand that they did not estimate his service higher than the labour of a purchased slave. To offer such wages was in fact "more offensive than a direct refusal" (Hengstenberg). Jehovah therefore describes the wages ironically as "a splendid value that has been set upon me." As the prophet fed the flock in the name of Jehovah, Jehovah regards the wages paid to His shepherd as paid to Himself, as the value set upon His personal work on behalf of the nation, and commands the prophet to throw this miserable sum to the potter. Both the

verb *hishlīkh* (throw) and the contemptuous expression used in relation to the sum paid down, prove unmistakeably that the words "throw to the potter" denote the actual casting away of the money. And this alone is sufficient to show that the view founded upon the last clause of the verse, "I threw it into the house of Jehovah to the potter," viz. that *hayyōtsēr* signifies the temple treasury, and that *yōtsēr* is a secondary form or a copyist's error for אוֹצָר, is simply a mistaken attempt to solve the real difficulty. God could not possibly say to the prophet, The wages paid for my service are indeed a miserable amount, yet put it in the temple treasury, for it is at any rate better than nothing. The phrase "throw to the potter" (for the use of *hishlīkh* with *'el pers.* compare 1 Kings xix. 19) is apparently a proverbial expression for contemptuous treatment (= to the knacker), although we have no means of tracing the origin of the phrase satisfactorily. Hengstenberg's assumption, that "to the potter" is the same as to an unclean place, is founded upon the assumption that the potter who worked for the temple had his workshop in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, which, having been formerly the scene of the abominable worship of Moloch, was regarded with abhorrence as an unclean place after its defilement by Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 10), and served as the slaughter-house for the city. But it by no means follows from Jer. xviii. 2 and xix. 2, that this potter dwelt in the valley of Ben-Hinnom; whereas Jer. xix. 1 and 2 lead rather to the opposite conclusion. If, for example, God there says to Jeremiah, "Go and buy a pitcher of the potter (ver. 1), and go out into the valley of Ben-Hinnom, which lies in front of the potter's gate" (ver. 2), it follows pretty clearly from these words that the pottery itself stood within the city gate. But even if the potter had had his workshop in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, which was regarded as unclean, he would not have become unclean himself in consequence, so that men could say "to the potter," just as we should say "*zum Schinder*" (to the knacker); and if he had been looked upon as unclean in this way, he could not possibly have worked for the temple, or supplied the cooking utensils for use in the service of God—namely, for boiling the holy sacrificial flesh. The attempts at an explanation made by Grotius and Hofmann are equally unsatisfactory. The former supposes that throwing anything

before the potter was equivalent to throwing it upon the heap of potsherds; the latter, that it was equivalent to throwing it into the dirt. But the potter had not to do with potsherds only, and potter's clay is not street mire. The explanation given by Koehler is more satisfactory; namely, that the meaning is, "The amount is just large enough to pay a potter for the pitchers and pots that have been received from him, and which are thought of so little value, that men easily comfort themselves when one or the other is broken." But this does not do justice to *hishlīkh*, since men do not *throw* to a potter the money for his wares, but put it into his hand. The word *hishlīkh* involves the idea of contempt, and earthen pots were things of insignificant worth. The execution of the command, "I threw it (*'ōthō*, the wages paid me) into the house of Jehovah to the potter," cannot be understood as signifying "into the house of Jehovah, that it might be taken thence to the potter" (Hengstenberg). If this were the meaning, it should have been expressed more clearly. As the words read, they can only be understood as signifying that the potter was in the house of Jehovah when the money was thrown to him; that he had either some work to do there, or that he had come there to bring some earthenware for the temple kitchens (cf. xiv. 20). This circumstance is no doubt a significant one; but the meaning is not merely to show that it was as the servant of the Lord, or in the name and by the command of Jehovah, that the prophet did this, instead of keeping the money (Koehler); for Zechariah could have expressed this in two or three words in a much simpler and clearer manner. The house of Jehovah came into consideration here rather as the place where the people appeared in the presence of their God, either to receive or to solicit the blessings of the covenant from Him. What took place in the temple, was done before the face of God, that God might call His people to account for it. Ver. 14. In consequence of this shameful payment for his service, the shepherd of the Lord breaks his second staff, as a sign that he will no longer feed the ungrateful nation, but leave it to its fate. The breaking of this staff is interpreted, in accordance with its name, as breaking or destroying the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. With these words, which are chosen with reference to the former division of the

nation into two hostile kingdoms, the dissolution of the fraternal unity of the nation is depicted, and the breaking up of the nation into parties opposing and destroying one another is represented as the result of a divine decree. Hofmann, Ebrard (*Offenbarung Johannis*), and Kliefoth have erroneously supposed that this relates to the division of the covenant nation into two parties, one of which, answering to the earlier Judah, would receive Christ, and remain the people of God; whilst the other, answering to the Ephraim or Israel of the times after Solomon, would reject Christ, and therefore be exposed to hardening and judgment. According to the evident meaning of the symbolical representation, the whole flock paid the good shepherd wages, which were tantamount to a rejection of his pastoral care, and was therefore given up by him; so that by falling into parties it destroyed itself, and, as the shepherd tells it in ver. 9, one devoured the flesh of the other. This is not at variance with the fact that by this self-destroying process they did not all perish, but that the miserable ones among the sheep who gave heed to the Lord, *i.e.* discerned their Saviour in the shepherd, and accepted Jesus Christ as the Messiah, were saved. This is simply passed over in our description, which treats of the fate of the whole nation as such, as for example in Rom. ix. 31, xi. 11–15, because the number of these believers formed a vanishing minority in comparison with the whole nation. The breaking up of the nation into parties manifested itself, however, in a terrible manner soon after the rejection of Christ, and accelerated its ruin in the Roman war.

There is this difference, however, in the interpretation which has been given to this symbolical prophecy, so far as the historical allusion or fulfilment is concerned, by expositors who believe in revelation, and very properly understand it as referring to the times of the second temple: namely, that some regard it as setting forth the whole of the conduct of God towards the covenant nation under the second temple; whilst others take it to be merely a symbol of one single attempt to save the nation when on the verge of ruin, namely, that of the pastoral office of Christ. Hengstenberg, with many of the older commentators, has decided in favour of the latter view. But all that he adduces in proof of the exclusive correctness

of this explanation does not touch the fact itself, but simply answers weak arguments by which the first view has been defended by its earlier supporters; whilst the main argument which he draws from ver. 8, to prove that the symbolical action of the prophet sets forth one single act of pastoral fidelity on the part of the Lord, to be accomplished in a comparatively brief space of time, rests upon a false interpretation of the verse in question. By the three shepherds, which the shepherd of Jehovah destroyed in a month, we are to understand, as we have shown at ver. 8, not the three classes of Jewish rulers, but the three imperial rulers, in whose power Israel continued from the times of the captivity to the time of Christ. But the supposition that this section refers exclusively to the work of Christ for the salvation of Israel during His life upon earth, is quite irreconcilable with this. We cannot therefore come to any other conclusion than that the first view, which has been defended by Calvin and others, and in the most recent times by Hofmann, Kliefoth, and Koehler, is the correct one, though we need not therefore assume with Calvin that the prophet "represents in his own person all the shepherds, by whose hand God ruled the people;" or discern, as Hofmann does, in the shepherd of the Lord merely a personification of the prophetic order; or, according to the form in which Koehler expresses the same view, a representation of the mediatorial work in the plan of salvation, of which Daniel was the first representative, and which was afterwards exhibited on the one hand by Haggai and Zechariah, and on the other hand by Zerubbabel and his successors, as the civil rulers of Israel, and by Joshua and those priests who resumed the duties of their office along with him. For the extermination or overthrow of the three imperial rulers or imperial powers was no more effected or carried out by the prophets named, than by the civil rulers and priesthood of Israel. The destruction was effected by Jehovah without the intervention of either the prophets, the priests, or the civil authorities of the Jews; and what Jehovah accomplished in this respect as the Shepherd of His people, was wrought by Him in that form of revelation by which He prepared the way for His coming to His people in the incarnation of Jesus Christ, namely as the Angel of Jehovah, although this form is not more precisely indicated in the symbolical

action described in the chapter before us. In that action the shepherd, to whom thirty silverlings are weighed out as his wages, is so far from being regarded as distinct from Jehovah, that Jehovah Himself speaks of these wages as the price at which He was valued by the people; and it is only from the gospel history that we learn that it was not Jehovah the super-terrestrial God, but the Son of God, who became incarnate in Christ, *i.e.* the Messiah, who was betrayed and sold for such a price as this.

What the Evangelist Matthew observes in relation to the fulfilment of vers. 12 and 13, presents various difficulties. After describing in ch. xxvi. the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, the taking of Jesus, and His condemnation to death by the Roman governor Pontius Pilate at the instigation of the high priests and elders of the Jews; and having still further related that Judas, feeling remorse at the condemnation of Jesus, brought back to the high priests and elders the thirty silverlings paid to him for the betrayal, with the confession that he had betrayed innocent blood, and that having thrown down the money in the temple, he went and hanged himself, whereupon the high priests resolved to apply the money to the purchase of a potter's field as a burial-ground for pilgrims; he adds in ch. xxvii. 9, 10: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value, and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." The smallest difficulty of all is occasioned by the fact that the thirty silverlings were weighed, according to the prophecy, as wages for the shepherd; whereas, according to the fulfilment, they were paid to Judas for the betrayal of Jesus. For, as soon as we trace back the form of the prophecy to its idea, the difference is resolved into harmony. The payment of the wages to the shepherd in the prophetical announcement is simply the symbolical form in which the nation manifests its ingratitude for the love and fidelity shown towards it by the shepherd, and the sign that it will no longer have him as its shepherd, and therefore a sign of the blackest ingratitude, and of hard-heartedness in return for the love displayed by the shepherd. The same ingratitude and the same hardness of heart are manifested in the resolution of the repre-

sentatives of the Jewish nation, the high priests and elders, to put Jesus their Saviour to death, and to take Him prisoner by bribing the betrayer. The payment of thirty silverlings to the betrayer was in fact the wages with which the Jewish nation repaid Jesus for what He had done for the salvation of Israel; and the contemptible sum which they paid to the betrayer was an expression of the deep contempt which they felt for Jesus. There is also no great importance in this difference, that here the prophet throws the money into the house of Jehovah to the potter; whereas, according to Matthew's account, Judas threw the silverlings into the temple, and the high priests would not put the money into the divine treasury, because it was blood-money, but applied it to the purchase of a potter's field, which received the name of a field of blood. For by this very fact not only was the prophecy almost literally fulfilled; but, so far as the sense is concerned, it was so exactly fulfilled, that every one could see that the same God who had spoken through the prophet, had by the secret operation of His omnipotent power, which extends even to the ungodly, so arranged the matter that Judas threw the money into the temple, to bring it before the face of God as blood-money, and to call down the vengeance of God upon the nation, and that the high priest, by purchasing the potter's field for this money, which received the name of "field of blood" in consequence "unto this day" (Matt. xxvii. 8), perpetuated the memorial of the sin committed against their Messiah. Matthew indicates this in the words "as the Lord commanded me," which correspond to וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי in ver. 13 of our prophecy; on which H. Aug. W. Meyer has correctly observed, "that the words 'as the Lord commanded me' express the fact, that the application of the wages of treachery to the purchase of the potter's field took place '*in accordance with the purpose of God*,' whose command the prophet had received. As God had directed the prophet (μοι) how to proceed with the thirty silverlings, so was it with the antitypical fulfilment of the prophecy by the high priests, and thus was the purpose of the divine will accomplished." The other points in which the quotation in Matthew differs from the original text (for the LXX. have adopted a totally different rendering) may be explained from the fact that the passage is quoted *memoriter*, and that the allusion to

the mode of fulfilment has exerted some influence upon the choice of words. This involuntary allusion shows itself in the reproduction of וָאֶקְחָה וגו׳, "*I* took the thirty silverlings, and threw them to the potter," by "*they* took the thirty pieces of silver, . . . and gave them for the potter's field;" whilst "the price of him that was valued" is only a free rendering of אֲדֶר חֻיָּקָר, and "of the children of Israel" an explanation of מִמֶּנָּהוּ.

The only real and important difficulty in the quotation is to be found in the fact that Matthew quotes the words of *Zechariah* as "that which was spoken by *Jeremy* the prophet," whereas all that he quotes is taken simply and solely from the prophet Zechariah. The reading Ἱερεμίου in Matthew is critically unassailable; and the assumption that Matthew refers to some lost scripture, or to a saying of Jeremiah handed down by oral tradition, and others of a similar kind, are simply arbitrary loopholes, which cannot come into any further consideration at all. On the other hand, the attempts made to explain the introduction of Jeremiah's name in the place of that of Zechariah, on the ground that, so far as the principal features are concerned, our prophecy is simply a resumption of the prophecy in Jer. xix., and that Zechariah announces a second fulfilment of this prophecy (Hengstenberg), or that it rests upon the prophecy of Jer. xviii., in which the potter is also introduced, and that its fulfilment goes beyond Zechariah's prophecy in those features which deviate from the words of Zechariah, so that Jer. xviii. xix. was fulfilled at the same time (Kliefoth), are deserving of serious consideration. Matthew, it is supposed, intended to point to this relation by mentioning Jeremiah instead of Zechariah. We would support this view without reserve, if the connection assumed to exist between our prophecy and the prophecies of Jer. xviii. and xix. could only be shown to be a probable one. But the proof adduced by Hengstenberg that our prophecy rests upon Jer. xviii. reduces itself to these two remarks: (1) That the potter, of whom Jeremiah purchased a pot (ch. xix.) to break it in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, had his workshop in this valley, which was regarded with abhorrence, as being unclean; and (2) that Zechariah was to throw the bad wages into the valley of Ben-Hinnom precisely at the spot where this potter's workshop was.

This he supposes to have taken place with a distinct allusion to the prophecy in Jer. xix., and with the assumption that the readers would have this prophecy before their minds. But in our exposition of ver. 13 we have already shown that Jeremiah did not purchase his pot in the valley of Ben-Hinnom, but of the potter who dwelt within the city gate; and also that the words of Zechariah, "I threw it into the house of Jehovah to the potter," do not affirm that the prophet threw the wages paid him into the valley of Ben-Hinnom. But with these false assumptions, the view founded upon them—namely, that our prophecy is a resumption of that of Jeremiah—necessarily falls to the ground. The symbolical action enjoined upon Jeremiah, and carried out by him, viz. the breaking to pieces in the valley of Ben-Hinnom of the pot purchased of the potter in the city, does not stand in any perceptible relation to the word of the Lord to Zechariah, to throw the wages paid to him into the house of Jehovah to the potter, so as to lead us to take this word as a resumption of that prophecy of Jeremiah. Kliefoth appears to have seen this also, inasmuch as he gives up the idea of finding the proof that our prophecy rests upon that of Jeremiah in the prophecy itself. He therefore bases this view upon the simple fact that Matthew (xxvii. 9) does not quote our passage as a word of Zechariah, but as a word of Jeremiah, and therefore at any rate regarded it as such; and that our passage has nothing independent in its contents, but is rather to be completed or explained from Jeremiah, though not from Jer. xix., but from Jer. xviii., where the potter who makes a pot, and breaks it in pieces because it is marred, represents God, who is doing just the same with Israel as the potter with the pot that is marred. Consequently even in Zechariah we are to understand by the potter, to whom the prophet throws the wages in the temple, Jehovah Himself, who dwells in the temple. But apart from the impossibility of understanding the words of God in ver. 13, "Throw the splendid price at which I have been valued by them to the potter," as meaning "Throw this splendid price *to me*," this view founders on the simple fact that it necessitates the giving up of the agreement between the prophecy and its historical fulfilment, inasmuch as in the fulfilment the price of the betrayal of Jesus is paid, not to the potter, Jehovah, but to a common potter for his field in

the valley of Ben-Hinnom. If, therefore, it is impossible to show any connection between our prophecy and the prophecies of Jeremiah, there is no other course left than to follow the example of Luther,—namely, either to attribute the introduction of Jeremiah's name in Matt. xxvii. 9 in the place of that of Zechariah to a failure of memory, or to regard it as a very old copyist's error, of a more ancient date than any of the critical helps that have come down to us.[1]

Vers. 15–17.—THE FOOLISH SHEPHERD.—Ver. 15. "*And Jehovah said to me, Take to thee yet the implement of a foolish shepherd.* Ver. 16. *For, behold, I raise up to myself a shepherd in the land: that which is perishing will he not observe, that which is scattered will he not seek, and that which is broken will he not heal; that which is standing will he not care for; and the flesh of the fat one will he eat, and tear their claws in pieces.* Ver. 17. *Woe to the worthless shepherd, who forsakes the flock! sword over his arm, and over his right eye: his arm shall wither, and his right eye be extinguished.*" After Israel has compelled the good shepherd to lay down his shepherd's office, in consequence of its own sin, it is not to be left to itself, but to be given into the hand of a foolish shepherd, who will destroy it. This is the thought in the fresh symbolical action. By עוֹד, "yet (again) take the instruments," etc., this action is connected with the previous one (vers. 4 sqq.); for עוֹד implies that the prophet had already taken a shepherd's instruments once before in his hand. The shepherd's instruments are the shepherd's staff, and taking it in his hand is a figurative representation of the feeding of a flock. This time he is to take the im-

[1] Luther says, in his *Commentary on Zechariah*, of the year 1528: "This chapter gives rise to the question, Why did Matthew attribute the text concerning the thirty pieces of silver to the prophet Jeremiah, whereas it stands here in Zechariah? This and other similar questions do not indeed trouble me very much, because they have but little bearing upon the matter; and Matthew does quite enough by quoting a certain scripture, although he is not quite correct about the name, inasmuch as he quotes prophetic sayings in other places, and yet does not even give the words as they stand in the Scripture. The same thing may occur now; and if it does not affect the sense that the words are not quoted exactly, what is to hinder his not having given the name quite correctly, since the words are of more importance than the name?"

plement of a foolish shepherd, *i.e.* to set forth the action of a foolish shepherd. Whether the pastoral staff of the foolish shepherd was of a different kind from that of the good shepherd, is a matter of indifference, so far as the meaning of the symbol is concerned. Folly, according to the Old Testament view, is synonymous with ungodliness and sin (cf. Ps. xiv. 1 sqq.). The reason for the divine command is given in ver. 16 by a statement of the meaning of the new symbolical action. God will raise up a shepherd over the land, who will not tend, protect, and care for the flock, but will destroy it. That we are not to understand by this foolish shepherd all the evil native rulers of the Jewish people collectively, as Hengstenberg supposes, is as evident from the context as it possibly can be. If the good shepherd represented by the prophet in vers. 4–14 is no other than Jehovah in His rule over Israel, the foolish shepherd who is raised up over the land in the place of the good shepherd, who had been despised and rejected, can only be the possessor of the imperial power, into whose power the nation is given up after the rejection of the good shepherd sent to it in Christ, *i.e.* the Roman empire, which destroyed the Jewish state. The rule of the foolish shepherd is depicted not only as an utter neglect, but as a consuming of the flock, as in Ezek. xxxiv. 3, 4, Jer. xxiii. 1, 2. The perishing sheep he will not seek, *i.e.* will not take charge of them (cf. ver. 9). הַנַּעַר cannot be the young or tender one; for not only is *na'ar*, the boy, not used of animals, but even when used of men it has not the meaning tender or weak. The word is a substantive formation from *nâ'ar*, to shake, *piel* to disperse, used in the sense of *dispulsio*, and the abstract being used for the concrete, the dispersed, the scattered, as the early translators rendered it. *Hannishbereth*, that which is broken, *i.e.* injured through the fracture of a limb. The opposite of *nishbereth* is הַנִּצָּבָה, that which stands upon its feet, and therefore is still strong. But not only will he neglect the flock: he will also seize upon it, and utterly consume it, not only devouring the flesh of the fat one, but even tearing in pieces the claws of the sheep. Not indeed by driving them along bad and stony roads (Tarn., Ewald, Hitzig), for this does no great harm to sheep, but so that when he consumes the sheep, he even splits or tears in pieces the claws, to seize upon and swallow the last

morsel of flesh or fat. But this tyrant will also receive his punishment for doing so. The judgment which is to fall upon him is set forth in accordance with the figure of the shepherd, as punishment through the loss of the arm and of the right eye. These two members are mentioned, because with the arm he ought to have protected and provided for the flock, and with the eye to have watched over them. The *Yod* in רֹעִי and עֹזְבִי is not the suffix of the first person, but the so-called *Yod compaginis* with the construct state (see at Hos. x. 11). הָאֱלִיל is a substantive, as in Job xiii. 4; it does not mean worthlessness, however, but nothingness. A worthless shepherd is one who is the opposite of what the shepherd should be, and will be: one who does not feed the flock, but leaves it to perish (עֹזְבִי הַצֹּאן). The words from *cherebh* to *y'mīnō* are a sentence in the form of a proclamation. The sword is called to come upon the arm and the right eye of the worthless shepherd, *i.e.* to hew off his arm, to smite his right eye. The further threat that the arm is to wither, the eye to become extinct, does not appear to harmonize with this. But the sword is simply mentioned as the instrument of punishment, and the connecting together of different kinds of punishment simply serves to exhibit the greatness and terrible nature of the punishment. With this threat, the threatening word concerning the imperial power of the world (ch. ix.–xi.) is very appropriately brought to a close, inasmuch as the prophecy thereby returns to its starting-point.

ISRAEL'S CONFLICT AND VICTORY, CONVERSION AND SANCTIFICATION.—CHAP. XII. 1–XIII. 6.

This section forms the first half of the second prophecy of Zechariah concerning the future of Israel and of the nations of the world, viz. the prophecy contained in ch. xii.–xiv., which, as a side-piece to ch. ix.–xi., treats of the judgment by which Israel, the nation of God, will be refined, sifted, and led on to perfection through conflict with the nations of the world. This first section announces how the conflict against Jerusalem and Judah will issue in destruction to the nations of the world (ch. xii. 1–4). Jehovah will endow the princes of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem with marvellous strength to overcome all

their foes (vers. 5–9), and will pour out His Spirit of grace upon them, so that they will bitterly repent the death of the Messiah (vers. 10–14), and purify themselves from all ungodliness (ch. xiii. 1–6).

Ver. 1. "*Burden of the word of Jehovah over Israel. Saying of Jehovah, who stretches out the heaven, and lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him.*" This heading, which belongs to the whole prophecy in ch. xii.–xiv., corresponds in form and contents to that in ch. ix. 1. The burden of Jehovah over Israel stands by the side of the burden of Jehovah over the land of Hadrach, the seat of the heathen power of the world (ch. ix. 1). And as the reason assigned for the latter was that the eye of Jehovah looks at mankind and all the tribes of Israel, so the former is explained here by an allusion to the creative omnipotence of Jehovah. Only there is nothing in our heading to answer to the words "and Damascus is his rest," which are added to the explanation of the symbolical name Hadrach in ch. ix. 1, because Israel, as the name of the covenant nation, needed no explanation. The other formal differences are very inconsiderable. עַל answers substantially to the ב (in בְּאֶרֶץ, ch. ix. 1), and signifies, notwithstanding the fact that *massa'* announces a threatening word, not "against," but "over," as we may see by comparing it with מַשָּׂא אֶל יִשׂ in Mal. i. 1. The reason for the *massa'* announced is given here in the form of an apposition, נְאֻם יְהוָה standing first like a heading, as in Ps. cx. 1, 2 Sam. xxiii. 1, Num. xxiv. 3, 15. The predicates of God are formed after Isa. xlii. 5 (see also Amos iv. 13), and describe God as the creator of the universe, and the former of the spirits of all men, to remove all doubt as to the realization of the wonderful things predicted in what follows. יֹצֵר רוּחַ וגו׳, the forming of the spirit within man, does not refer to the creation of the spirits or souls of men once for all, but denotes the continuous creative formation and guidance of the human spirit by the Spirit of God. Consequently we cannot restrict the stretching out of the heaven and the laying of the foundation of the earth to the creation of the universe as an act accomplished once for all at the beginning of all things (Gen. ii. 1), but must take these words also as referring to the upholding of the world as a work of the continuously creative providence of

God. According to the biblical view (cf. Ps. civ. 2–4), "God stretches out the heavens every day afresh, and every day He lays the foundation of the earth, which, if His power did not uphold it, would move from its orbit, and fall into ruin" (Hengst.).

Ver. 2. "*Behold, I make Jerusalem a reeling-basin for all the nations round about, and upon Judah also will it be at the siege against Jerusalem.* Ver. 3. *And it will come to pass on that day, I will make Jerusalem a burden-stone to all nations: all who lift it up will tear rents for themselves; and all the nations of the earth will gather together against it.* Ver. 4. *In that day, is the saying of Jehovah, will I smite every horse with shyness, and its rider with madness, and over the house of Judah will I open my eyes, and every horse of the nations will I smite with blindness.*" These verses allude to an attack on the part of the nations upon Jerusalem and Judah, which will result in injury and destruction to those who attack it. The Lord will make Jerusalem a reeling-basin to all nations round about. *Saph* does not mean threshold here, but basin, or a large bowl, as in Ex. xii. 22. רַעַל is equivalent to תַּרְעֵלָה in Isa. li. 17 and Ps. lx. 5, viz. reeling. Instead of the goblet, the prophet speaks of a basin, because many persons can put their mouths to this at the same time, and drink out of it (Schmieder). The "cup of reeling," *i.e.* a goblet filled with intoxicating drink, is a figure very frequently employed to denote the divine judgment, which intoxicates the nations, so that they are unable to stand any longer, and therefore fall to the ground and perish (see at Isa. li. 17).—Ver. 2*b* has been explained in very different ways. It is an old and widespread view, that the words "also upon Judah will it be," etc., express the participation of Judah in the siege of Jerusalem. The Chaldee and Jerome both adopt this explanation, that in the siege of Jerusalem Judah will be constrained by the nations to besiege the capital of its own land. The grammatical reason assigned for this view is, that we must either take הָיָה with עַל in the sense of obligation (it will also be the duty of Judah: Mich., Ros., Ewald), or supply סַף־רַעַל as the subject to יִהְיֶה: the reeling-basin will also come upon Judah. But there is great harshness in both explanations. With the former, לְהִלָּחֵם, or some other infinitive, would hardly have been omitted; and with the latter, the preposition

לְ would stand before יְהוּדָה, instead of עַל. Moreover, in what follows there is no indication whatever of Judah's having made common cause with the enemy against Jerusalem; on the contrary, Judah and Jerusalem stand together in opposition to the nations, and the princes of Judah have strength in the inhabitants of Jerusalem (ver. 5), and destroy the enemy to save Jerusalem (ver. 6). Moreover, it is only by a false interpretation that any one can find a conflict between Judah and Jerusalem indicated in ch. xiv. 14. And throughout it is incorrect to designate the attitude of Judah towards Jerusalem in these verses as "opposition,"—a notion upon which Ebrard (*Offenb. Joh.*) and Kliefoth have founded the marvellous view, that by Jerusalem with its inhabitants and the house of David we are to understand the unbelieving portion of Israel; and by Judah with its princes, Christendom, or the true people of God, formed of believing Israelites, and increased by believing Gentiles. Judah is not opposed to Jerusalem, but simply distinguished from it, just as the Jewish kingdom or people is frequently designated by the prophets as Jerusalem and Judah. The גַּם, which does not separate, but adds, is of itself inapplicable to the idea of opposition. Consequently we should expect the words וְגַם עַל יְהוּדָה to express the thought, that Judah will be visited with the same fate as Jerusalem, as Luther, Calvin, and many others follow the Peshito in supposing that they do. הָיָה עַל has then the meaning to happen, to come over a person; and the only question is, What are we to supply in thought as the subject? The best course is probably to take it from the previous clause, "that which passes over Jerusalem;" for the proposal of Koelrler to supply *mâtsōr* as the subject is precluded by the circumstance that *mâtsōr*, a siege, can only affect a city or fortress (cf. Deut. xx. 20), and not a land. The thought is strengthened in ver. 3. Jerusalem is to become a burden-stone for all nations, which inflicts contusions and wounds upon those who try to lift it up or carry it away ("experiencing no hurt itself, it causes great damage to them:" Marck). The figure is founded upon the idea of the labour connected with building, and not upon the custom, which Jerome speaks of as a very common one in his time among the youth of Palestine, of testing and exercising their strength by lifting heavy stones. There is a gradation in the

thought, both in the figure of the burdensome stone, which wounds whoever tries to lift it, whilst intoxicating wine only makes one powerless and incapable of any undertaking, and also in the description given of the object, viz. in ver. 2 all nations round about Jerusalem, and in ver. 3 all peoples and all nations of the earth. It is only in the last clause of ver. 3 that the oppression of Jerusalem indicated in the two figures is more minutely described, and in ver. 4 that its overthrow by the help of God is depicted. The Lord will throw the mind and spirit of the military force of the enemy into such confusion, that instead of injuring Jerusalem and Judah, it will rush forward to its own destruction. Horses and riders individualize the warlike forces of the enemy. The rider, smitten with madness, turns his sword against his own comrades in battle (cf. ch. xiv. 3, Judg. vii. 22, 1 Sam. xiv. 20). On the other hand, Jehovah will open His eyes upon Judah for its protection (1 Kings viii. 29; Neh. i. 6; Ps. xxxii. 8). This promise is strengthened by the repetition of the punishment to be inflicted upon the enemy. Not only with alarm, but with blindness, will the Lord smite their horses. We have an example of this in 2 Kings vi. 18, where the Lord smote the enemy with blindness in answer to Elisha's prayer, *i.e.* with mental blindness, so that, instead of seizing the prophet, they fell into the hands of Israel. The three plagues, *timmâhōn*, *shiggā'ōn*, and *'ivvârōn*, are those with which rebellious Israelites are threatened in Deut. xxviii. 28. The "house of Judah" is the covenant nation, the population of Judah including the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as we may see from what follows.

Ver. 5. "*And the princes of Judah will say in their hearts, The inhabitants of Jerusalem are strength to me, in Jehovah of hosts their God.* Ver. 6. *On that day will I make the princes of Judah as a basin of fire under logs of wood, and like a torch of fire under sheaves; and they will devour all nations round about, on the right and on the left; and Jerusalem will dwell still further in its place, at Jerusalem.* Ver. 7. *And Jehovah will save the tents of Judah first, that the splendour of the house of David and the splendour of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not lift itself up over Judah.*" The princes of Judah are mentioned as the leaders of the people in war. What they say is the conviction of the whole nation (*'allūph*, as in ch. ix. 7).

אֵמְצָה (in this form ἅπ. λεγ.) is a substantive = אֹמֶץ, strength (Job xvii. 9). The singular *lī* (to *me*) expresses the fact that every individual says or thinks this, as with the expression "should *I* weep" in ch. vii. 3. The princes of Judah recognise in the inhabitants of Jerusalem their strength or might, not in this sense, that Judah, being crowded together before Jerusalem, expects help against the foe from the strength of the city and the assistance of its inhabitants, as Hofmann and Koehler maintain, for "their whole account of the inhabitants of the land being shut up in the city (or crowded together before the walls of Jerusalem, and covered by them) is a pure invention" (Koehler), and has no foundation in the text; but in this sense, that the inhabitants of Jerusalem are strong through Jehovah their God, *i.e.* through the fact that Jehovah has chosen Jerusalem, and by virtue of this election will save the city of His sanctuary (compare x. 12 with iii. 2, i. 17, ii. 16). Because the princes of Judah put their trust in the divine election of Jerusalem, the Lord makes them into a basin of fire under logs of wood, and a burning torch under sheaves, so that they destroy all nations round about like flames of fire, and Jerusalem therefore remains unconquered and undestroyed in its place at Jerusalem. In this last sentence *Jerusalem* is first of all the population personified as a woman, and in the second instance the city as such. From the fact that Jerusalem is still preserved, in consequence of the destruction of the enemy proceeding from the princes of Judah, it is very evident that the princes of Judah are the representatives of the whole nation, and that the whole of the covenant nation (Judah with Jerusalem) is included in the house of Judah in ver. 4. And ver. 7 may easily be reconciled with this. The statement that the Lord will "save the tents of Judah first, that the splendour of the house of David may not lift itself up above Judah," contains the simple thought that the salvation will take place in such a manner that no part of the nation will have any occason to lift itself up above another, and that because the salvation is effected not by human power, but by the omnipotence of God alone. "The tents of Judah, *i.e.* its huts, form an antithesis to the splendid buildings of the capital, and probably (?) also point to the defenceless condition of Judah, through which it was absolutely cast upon the help

of God"[1] (Hengstenberg). תִּפְאֶרֶת, the splendour or glory, not the boasting. The house of David is the royal line, which was continued in Zerubbabel and his family, and culminated in Christ. Its splendour consists in the glorification promised in ch. iv. 6–10 and 14, and Hag. ii. 23; and the splendour of the inhabitants of Jerusalem is the promises which this city received through its election to be the city of God, in which Jehovah would be enthroned in His sanctuary, and also through the future glorification predicted for it in consequence (ch. i. 16, 17, ii. 8, 14, sqq.). The antithesis between Jerusalem and the house of David on the one hand, and the tents of Judah on the other, does not serve to express the thought that "the strong ones will be saved by the weak, in order that the true equilibrium may arise between the two" (Hengst.), for Judah cannot represent the weak ones if its princes consume the enemy like flames of fire; but the thought is simply this: At the deliverance from the attack of the foe, Jerusalem will have no pre-eminence over Judah; but the promises which Jerusalem and the house of David have received will benefit Judah, *i.e.* the whole of the covenant nation, in like manner. This thought is expressed in the following way: The defenceless land will be delivered sooner than the well-defended capital, that the latter may not lift itself up above the former, but that both may humbly acknowledge "that the victory in both cases is the Lord's" (Jerome); for, according to ver. 8, Jerusalem will enjoy in the fullest measure the salvation of God.

Ver. 8. "*On that day Jehovah will shelter the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that stumbleth among them will be as David on that day; and the house of David as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them.* Ver. 9. *And it will come to pass on that day, I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.*" In the conflict with the heathen nations, the Lord will endow the inhabitants of Jerusalem with marvellous strength with which to overcome all their foes. The population of Jerusalem is divided into two classes, the weak and the strong. The weak are designated as *hannikhshâl*, the stumbling one, who cannot stand firmly upon his feet (1 Sam.

[1] Calvin observes: "In my opinion, the prophet applies the term 'tents' to huts which cannot protect their guests or inhabitants. We have thus a tacit contrast between huts and fortified cities."

ii. 4). These are to become like David, the bravest hero of Israel (cf. 1 Sam. xvii. 34 sqq., 2 Sam. xvii. 8). The strong ones, designated as the house, *i.e.* the household or family of David, are to be like *Elohim*, *i.e.* not angels, but God, the Deity, *i.e.* a superhuman being (cf. Ps. viii. 6), yea, like the angel of Jehovah, who goes before Israel (לִפְנֵיהֶם), or the revealer of the invisible God, who is essentially the equal of Jehovah (see at ch. i. 8). The point of comparison lies in the power and strength, not in moral resemblance to God, as Kliefoth supposes, who takes *Elohim* as equivalent to *Jehovah*, and identifies it with the angel of Jehovah, as some of the earlier commentators have done, and places the graduation of *Elohim* into the angel of Jehovah in the appearance of God in human form, in which case, however, לִפְנֵיהֶם has no meaning. This shows rather that the "angel of Jehovah" is simply referred to here in connection with his appearance in the history of Israel, when he went at the head of Israel and smote the Egyptians and all the enemies of Israel (Ex. xxiii. 20 sqq.; Josh. v. 13 sqq.). This is evident from the antithesis in ver. 9. Whilst Jehovah endows the inhabitants of Jerusalem with supernatural strength, He will seek to destroy all the nations which attack Jerusalem. *Biqqēsh*, followed by an infinitive with *Lamed*, to strive after anything, as in ch. vi. 7. בּוֹא עַל applied to the advance of the enemy against a city (=עָלָה עַל, Isa. vii. 1).

Vers. 10–14. But the Lord will do still more than this for His people. He will renew it by pouring out His spirit of grace upon it, so that it will come to the knowledge of the guilt it has incurred by the rejection of the Saviour, and will bitterly repent of its sin. Ver. 10. "*And I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they will look upon me, whom they have pierced, and will mourn over him like the mourning over an only one, and will grieve bitterly over him, as one grieves bitterly over the first-born.*" This new promise is simply attached to the previous verse by ו *consec.* (וְשָׁפַכְתִּי). Through this mode of attachment such connections as that suggested by Kliefoth, "But such glory can only be enjoyed by rebellious Israel when it is converted, and acknowledges and bewails Him whom it has rejected," are precluded, as at

variance with the text. There is not a word in the text about conversion as the condition on which the glory set before them in vers. 3–9 was to be obtained; on the contrary, conversion is represented as one fruit of the outpouring of the spirit of prayer upon the nation; and this outpouring of the Spirit is introduced by וְשָׁפַכְתִּי, which corresponds to אֲבַקֵּשׁ in ver. 9, as a new feature in the salvation, to be added to the promise of the destruction of the nations which fight against Jerusalem. The fact that only the inhabitants of Jerusalem are named, and not those of Judah also, is explained correctly by the commentators from the custom of regarding the capital as the representative of the whole nation. And it follows *eo ipso* from this, that in ver. 8 also the expression "inhabitants of Jerusalem" is simply an individualizing epithet for the whole of the covenant nation. But just as in ver. 8 the house of David is mentioned emphatically along with these as the princely family and representative of the ruling class, so is it also in ver. 10, for the purpose of expressing the thought that the same salvation is to be enjoyed by the whole nation, in all its ranks, from the first to the last. The outpouring of the Spirit points back to Joel iii. 1 sqq., except that there the Spirit of Jehovah generally is spoken of, whereas here it is simply the spirit of grace and of supplication. *Chēn* does not mean "prayer," nor emotion, or goodness, or love (Hitzig, Ewald), but simply grace or favour; and here, as in ch. iv. 7, the grace of God; not indeed in its objectivity, but as a principle at work in the human mind. The spirit of grace is the spirit which produces in the mind of man the experience of the grace of God. But this experience begets in the soul of sinful man the knowledge of sin and guilt, and prayer for the forgiveness of sin, *i.e.* supplication; and this awakens sorrow and repentance. הִבִּיטוּ אֵלַי, they look upon me. *Hibbīt*, used of bodily sight as well as spiritual (cf. Num. xxi. 9). The suffix in אֵלַי (to *me*) refers to the speaker. This is *Jehovah*, according to ver. 1, the creator of the heaven and the earth. אֶת־אֲשֶׁר דָּקָרוּ, not "Him whom they pierced," but simply "whom they pierced." אֵת, that is to say, is not governed by *hibbītū* as a second object, but simply refers to אֵלַי, to me, "whom they pierced." אֵת־אֲשֶׁר is chosen here, as in Jer. xxxviii. 9, in the place of the simple אֲשֶׁר, to mark אֲשֶׁר more clearly as an accu-

sative, since the simple אֲשֶׁר might also be rendered "who pierced (me):" cf. Ges. § 123, 2, Not. 1. *Dâqar* does not mean to ridicule, or scoff at, but only to pierce, thrust through, and to slay by any kind of death whatever (cf. Lam. iv. 9). And the context shows that here it signifies to put to death. With reference to the explanation proposed by Calvin, "whom they have harassed with insults," Hitzig has very properly observed: "If it were nothing more than this, wherefore such lamentation over him, which, according to the use of סָפַד, with עַל governing the person, and from the similes employed, is to be regarded as a lamentation for the dead?" It is true that we have not to think of a slaying of Jehovah, the creator of the heaven and the earth, but simply of the slaying of the *Maleach* Jehovah, who, being of the same essence with Jehovah, became man in the person of Jesus Christ. As Zechariah repeatedly represents the coming of the Messiah as a coming of Jehovah in His *Maleach* to His people, he could, according to this view, also describe the slaying of the *Maleach* as the slaying of Jehovah. And Israel having come to the knowledge of its sin, will bitterly bewail this deed. עָלָיו does not mean thereat, *i.e.* at the crime, but is used personally, over him whom they have pierced. Thus the transition from the first person (אֵלַי) to the third (עָלָיו) points to the fact that the person slain, although essentially one with Jehovah, is personally distinct from the Supreme God. The lamentation for the only son (*yâchīd*: cf. Amos viii. 10) and for the first-born is the deepest and bitterest death-wail. The *inf. abs. hâmēr*, which is used in the place of the finite verb, signifies making bitter, to which *mispēd* is to be supplied from the previous sentence (cf. מִסְפֵּד תַּמְרוּרִים, Jer. vi. 26).

The historical fulfilment of this prophecy commenced with the crucifixion of the Son of God, who had come in the flesh. The words הִבִּיטוּ אֵלַי אֵת־אֲשֶׁר דָּקָרוּ are quoted in the Gospel of John (xix. 37), according to the Greek rendering ὄψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν, which probably emanated not from the LXX., but from Aquila, or Theodotion, or Symmachus, as having been fulfilled in Christ, by the fact that a soldier pierced His side with a lance as He was hanging upon the cross (*vid.* John xix. 34). If we compare this quotation with the fact mentioned in ver. 36, that they did not break any of His bones,

there can be no doubt that John quotes this passage with distinct allusion to this special circumstance; only we must not infer from this, that the evangelist regarded the meaning of the prophecy as exhausted by this allusion. The piercing with the spear is simply looked upon by him as the climax of all the mortal sufferings of Christ; and even with Zechariah the piercing is simply an individualizing expression for putting to death, the instrument used and the kind of death being of very subordinate importance. This is evident from a comparison of our verse with ch. xiii. 7, where the sword is mentioned as the instrument employed, whereas *dâqar* points rather to a spear. What we have observed at p. 337 respecting the fulfilment of ch. ix. 9 by the entry of Christ into Jerusalem, also applies to this special fulfilment, viz. that the so to speak literal fulfilment in the outward circumstances only served to make the internal concatenation of the prophecy with its historical realization so clear, that even unbelievers could not successfully deny it. Luke (xxiii. 48) indicates the commencement of the fulfilment of the looking at the slain one by these words: "And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts." (For the smiting of the breasts, comp. Isa. xxxii. 12, סְפֹד עַל שָׁדַיִם.) "The crowds, who had just before been crying out, Crucify him, here smite upon their breasts, being overpowered with the proofs of the superhuman exaltation of Jesus, and lament over the crucified one, and over their own guilt" (Hengst.). The true and full commencement of the fulfilment, however, shows itself in the success which attended the preaching of Peter on the first day of Pentecost,—namely, in the fact that three thousand were pricked in their heart with penitential sorrow on account of the crucifixion of their Saviour, and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins (Acts ii. 37–41), and in the further results which followed the preaching of the apostles for the conversion of Israel (Acts iii.–v.). The fulfilment has continued with less striking results through the whole period of the Christian church, in conversions from among the Jews; and it will not terminate till the remnant of Israel shall turn as a people to Jesus the Messiah, whom its fathers crucified. On the other hand, those who continue obstinately in unbelief will see Him at last when He returns

in the clouds of heaven, and shriek with despair (Rev. i. 7; Matt. xxiv. 30).

In vers. 11–14 the magnitude and universality of the mourning are still further depicted. Ver. 11. "*In that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be great, like the mourning of Hadad-rimmon in the valley of Megiddo.* Ver. 12. *And the land will mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart.* Ver. 13. *The family of the house of Levi apart, and their wives apart; the family of the Shimeite apart, and their wives apart.* Ver. 14. *All the rest of the families, every family apart, and their wives apart.*" In ver. 11, the depth and bitterness of the pain on account of the slain Messiah are depicted by comparing it to the mourning of Hadad-rimmon. Jerome says with regard to this: "Adad-remmon is a city near Jerusalem, which was formerly called by this name, but is now called Maximianopolis, in the field of Mageddon, where the good king Josiah was wounded by Pharaoh Necho." This statement of Jerome is confirmed by the fact that the ancient Canaanitish or Hebrew name of the city has been preserved in *Rûmuni*, a small village three-quarters of an hour to the south of Lejun (*Legio = Megiddo:* see at Josh. xii. 21; and V. de Velde, *Reise*, i. p. 267). The mourning of Hadad-rimmon is therefore the mourning for the calamity which befel Israel at Hadad-rimmon in the death of the good king Josiah, who was mortally wounded in the valley Megiddo, according to 2 Chron. xxxv. 22 sqq., so that he very soon gave up the ghost. The death of this most pious of all the kings of Judah was bewailed by the people, especially the righteous members of the nation, so bitterly, that not only did the prophet Jeremiah compose an elegy on his death, but other singers, both male and female, bewailed him in dirges, which were placed in a collection of elegiac songs, and preserved in Israel till long after the captivity (2 Chron. xxxv. 25). Zechariah compares the lamentation for the putting of the Messiah to death to this great national mourning. All the other explanations that have been given of these words are so arbitrary, as hardly to be worthy of notice. This applies, for example, to the idea mentioned by the Chald., that the reference is to the death of the wicked Ahab, and also to Hitzig's

hypothesis, that *Hadad-rimmon* was one name of the god *Adonis*. For, apart from the fact that it is only from this passage that Movers has inferred that there ever was an idol of that name, a prophet of Jehovah could not possibly have compared the great lamentation of the Israelites over the death of the Messiah to the lamentation over the death of Ahab the ungodly king of Israel, or to the mourning for a Syrian idol. But the mourning will not be confined to Jerusalem; the land (*hâ'âretz*), *i.e.* the whole nation, will also mourn. This universality of the lamentation is individualized in vers. 12–14, and so depicted as to show that all the families and households of the nation mourn, and not the men only, but also the women. To this end the prophet mentions four distinct leading and secondary families, and then adds in conclusion, "all the rest of the families, with their wives." Of the several families named, two can be determined with certainty,—namely, the family of the house of David, *i.e.* the posterity of king David, and the family of the house of Levi, *i.e.* the posterity of the patriarch Levi. But about the other two families there is a difference of opinion. The rabbinical writers suppose that *Nathan* is the well known prophet of that name, and the family of *Shimei* the tribe of Simeon, which is said, according to the rabbinical fiction, to have furnished teachers to the nation.[1] But the latter opinion is overthrown, apart from any other reason, by the fact that the patronymic of *Simeon* is not written שִׁמְעִי, but שִׁמְעֹנִי, in Josh. xxi. 4, 1 Chron. xxvii. 16. Still less can the Benjamite Shimei, who cursed David (2 Sam. xvi. 5 sqq.), be intended. מִשְׁפַּחַת הַשִּׁמְעִי is the name given in Num. iii. 21 to the family of the son of Gershon and the grandson of Levi (Num. iii. 17 sqq.). This is the family intended here, and in harmony with this *Nathan* is not the prophet of that name, but the son of David, from whom Zerubbabel was descended (Luke iii. 27, 31). Luther adopted this explanation: "Four families," he says, "are enumerated, two from the royal line, under the names of David and Nathan,

[1] Jerome gives the Jewish view thus: "In David the regal tribe is included, *i.e.* Judah. In Nathan the prophetic order is described. Levi refers to the priests, from whom the priesthood sprang. In Simeon the teachers are included, as the companies of masters sprang from that tribe. He says nothing about the other tribes, as they had no special privilege or dignity."

and two from the priestly line, as Levi and Shimei; after which he embraces all together." Of two tribes he mentions one leading family and one subordinate branch, to show that not only are all the families of Israel in general seized with the same grief, but all the separate branches of those families. Thus the word *mishpâchâh* is used here, as in many other cases, in the wider and more restricted meaning of the leading and the subordinate families.

Chap. xiii. 1–6. The penitential supplication of Israel will lead to a thorough renewal of the nation, since the Lord will open to the penitent the fountain of His grace for the cleansing away of sin and the sanctifying of life. Ver. 1. "*In that day will a fountain be opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness.*" As the Lord Himself pours out the spirit of supplication upon Israel, so does He also provide the means of purification from sin. A fountain is opened, when its stream of water bursts forth from the bosom of the earth (see Isa. xli. 18, xxxv. 6). The water, which flows from the fountain opened by the Lord, is a water of sprinkling, with which sin and uncleanness are removed. The figure is taken partly from the water used for the purification of the Levites at their consecration, which is called מֵי חַטָּאת, sin-water, or water of absolution, in Num. viii. 7, and partly from the sprinkling-water prepared from the sacrificial ashes of the red heifer for purification from the defilement of death, which is called מֵי נִדָּה, water of uncleanness, *i.e.* water which removed uncleanness, in Num. xix. 9. Just as bodily uncleanness is a figure used to denote spiritual uncleanness, the defilement of sin (cf. Ps. li. 9), so is earthly sprinkling-water a symbol of the spiritual water by which sin is removed. By this water we have to understand not only grace in general, but the spiritual sprinkling-water, which is prepared through the sacrificial death of Christ, through the blood that He shed for sin, and which is sprinkled upon us for the cleansing away of sin in the gracious water of baptism. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin (1 John i. 7; compare v. 6).

The house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem represent the whole nation here, as in ch. xii. 10. This cleansing will be followed by a new life in fellowship with God, since the Lord will remove everything that could hinder

sanctification. This renewal of life and sanctification is described in vers. 2-7. Ver. 2. "*And it will come to pass in that day, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts, I will cut off the names of the idols out of the land, they shall be remembered no more; and the prophets also and the spirit of uncleanness will I remove out of the land.* Ver. 3. *And it will come to pass, if a man prophesies any more, his father and his mother, they that begat him, will say to him, Thou must not live, for thou hast spoken deceit in the name of Jehovah: and his father and his mother, they that begat him, will pierce him through because of his prophesying.* Ver. 4. *And it will come to pass on that day, the prophets will be ashamed every one of his vision, at his prophesying, and will no more put on a hairy mantle to lie.* Ver. 5. *And he will say, I am no prophet, I am a man who cultivates the land; for a man bought me from my youth.* Ver. 6. *And if they shall say to him, What scars are these between thy hands? he will say, These were inflicted upon me in the house of my loves.*" The new life in righteousness and holiness before God is depicted in an individualizing form as the extermination of idols and false prophets out of the holy land, because idolatry and false prophecy were the two principal forms in which ungodliness manifested itself in Israel. The allusion to idols and false prophets by no means points to the times before the captivity; for even if gross idolatry, and therefore false prophecy, did not spread any more among the Jews after the captivity, such passages as Neh. vi. 10, where lying prophets rise up, and even priests contract marriages with Canaanitish and other heathen wives, from whom children sprang who could not even speak the Jewish language (Ezra ix. 2 sqq.; Neh. xiii. 23), show very clearly that the danger of falling back into gross idolatry was not a very remote one. Moreover, the more refined idolatry of pharisaic self-righteousness and work-holiness took the place of the grosser idolatry, and the prophets generally depict the future under the forms of the past. The cutting off of the names of the idols denotes utter destruction (cf. Hos. ii. 19). The prophets are false prophets, who either uttered the thoughts of their hearts as divine inspiration, or stood under the demoniacal influence of the spirit of darkness. This is evident from the fact that they are associated not only with idols, but with the "spirit of uncleanness." For this, the opposite of

the spirit of grace (ch. xii. 10), is the evil spirit which culminates in Satan, and works in the false prophets as a lying spirit (1 Kings xxii. 21–23; Rev. xvi. 13, 14). The complete extermination of this unclean spirit is depicted thus in vers. 3–6, that not only will Israel no longer tolerate any prophet in the midst of it (ver. 3), but even the prophets themselves will be ashamed of their calling (vers. 4–6). The first case is to be explained from the law in Deut. xiii. 6–11 and xviii. 20, according to which a prophet who leads astray to idolatry, and one who prophesies in his own name or in the name of false gods, are to be put to death. This commandment will be carried out by the parents upon any one who shall prophesy in the future. They will pronounce him worthy of death as speaking lies, and inflict the punishment of death upon him (*dâqar*, used for putting to death, as in ch. xii. 10). This case, that a man is regarded as a false prophet and punished in consequence, simply because he prophesies, rests upon the assumption that at that time there will be no more prophets, and that God will not raise them up or send them any more. This assumption agrees both with the promise, that when God concludes a new covenant with His people and forgives their sins, no one will teach another any more to know the Lord, but all, both great and small, will know Him, and all will be taught of God (Jer. xxxi. 33, 34; Isa. liv. 13); and also with the teaching of the Scriptures, that the Old Testament prophecy reached to John the Baptist, and attained its completion and its end in Christ (Matt. xi. 13; Luke xvi. 16, cf. Matt. v. 17). At that time will those who have had to do with false prophecy no longer pretend to be prophets, or assume the appearance of prophets, or put on the hairy garment of the ancient prophets, of Elias for example, but rather give themselves out as farm-servants, and declare that the marks of wounds inflicted upon themselves when prophesying in the worship of heathen gods are the scars of wounds which they have received (vers. 4–6). בּוֹשׁ מִן, to be ashamed on account of (cf. Isa. i. 29), not to desist with shame. The form הִנָּבְאֹתוֹ in ver. 4 instead of הִנָּבְאוֹ (ver. 3) may be explained from the fact that the verbs ל״א and ל״ה frequently borrow forms from one another (Ges. § 75, Anm. 20–22). On אַדֶּרֶת שֵׂעָר, see at 2 Kings i. 8. לְמַעַן כַּחֵשׁ, to lie, *i.e.* to give themselves the appearance of

prophets, and thereby to deceive the people. The subject to וְאָמַר in ver. 5 is אִישׁ from ver. 4; and the explanation given by the man is not to be taken as an answer to a question asked by another concerning his circumstances, for it has not been preceded by any question, but as a confession made by his own spontaneous impulse, in which he would repudiate his former calling. The verb הִקְנָה is not a *denom.* of מִקְנֶה, *servum facere, servo uti* (Maurer, Koehler, and others), for *migneh* does not mean slave, but that which has been acquired, or an acquisition. It is a simple *hiphil* of *qânâh* in the sense of acquiring, or acquiring by purchase, not of selling. That the statement is an untruthful assertion is evident from ver. 6, the two clauses of which are to be taken as speech and reply, or question and answer. Some one asks the prophet, who has given himself out as a farm-servant, where the stripes (*makkōth*, strokes, marks of strokes) between his hands have come from, and he replies that he received them in the house of his lovers. אֲשֶׁר הֻכֵּיתִי, ἅς (*sc.* πληγὰς) ἐπλήγην: cf. Ges. § 143, 1. The questioner regards the stripes or wounds as marks of wounds inflicted upon himself, which the person addressed had made when prophesying, as is related of the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings xviii. 28 (see the comm.). The expression "between the hands" can hardly be understood in any other way than as relating to the palms of the hands and their continuation up the arms, since, according to the testimony of ancient writers (Movers, *Phöniz.* i. p. 682), in the self-mutilations connected with the Phrygian, Syrian, and Cappadocian forms of worship, the arms were mostly cut with swords or knives. The meaning of the answer given by the person addressed depends upon the view we take of the word מְאַהֲבִים. As this word is generally applied to paramours, Hengstenberg retains this meaning here, and gives the following explanation of the passage: namely, that the person addressed confesses that he has received the wounds in the temples of the idols, which he had followed with adulterous love, so that he admits his former folly with the deepest shame. But the context appears rather to indicate that this answer is also nothing more than an evasion, and that he simply pretends that the marks were scars left by the chastisements which he received when a boy in the house of either loving parents or some other loving relations.

JUDGMENT OF REFINEMENT FOR ISRAEL, AND GLORIOUS END OF JERUSALEM.—CHAP. XIII. 7–XIV. 21.

The prophecy takes a new turn at ver. 7, and announces the judgment, through which Israel will be refined from the dross still adhering to it, and transformed into the truly holy people of the Lord by the extermination of its spurious and corrupt members. This second half of the prophecy is really an expansion of the first (xii. 1–xiii. 6). Whereas the first announces how the Lord will protect Israel and Jerusalem against the pressure of the powers of the world, how He will smite the enemy, and not only endow His people with miraculous power which ensures their victory, but also by pouring out His Spirit of grace, lead it to a knowledge of the guilt it has contracted by putting the Messiah to death, and to repentance and renovation of life; the second half depicts the judgment which will fall upon Jerusalem, to sever the ungodly from the righteous, to exterminate the former out of the land of the Lord, to purify and preserve the latter, and by completing this separation, to perfect His kingdom in glory. This second half is divisible again into two parts, the former of which (ch. xiii. 7–9) gives a summary of the contents, whilst the latter (ch. xiv.) expands it into fuller detail.

Ver. 7. "*Arise, O sword, over my shepherd, and over the man who is my neighbour, is the saying of Jehovah of hosts: smite the shepherd, that the sheep may be scattered; and I will bring back my hand over the little ones.* Ver. 8. *And it will come to pass in all the land, is the saying of Jehovah; two parts therein shall be cut off, shall die, and the third remains therein.* Ver. 9. *And the third will I bring into the fire, and melt them as silver is melted, and will refine them as gold is refined: it will call upon my name, and I will answer it; I say, It is my people; and it will say, Jehovah my God.*" The summons addressed to the sword, to awake and smite, is a poetical turn to express the thought that the smiting takes place with or according to the will of God. For a similar personification of the sword, see Jer. xlvii. 6. רֹעִי is the shepherd of Jehovah, since the summons comes from Jehovah. In what sense the person to be smitten is called the shepherd of Jehovah, we may see from the clause עַל־גֶּבֶר עֲמִיתִי. The word עָמִית, which only occurs in

the Pentateuch and in Zechariah, who has taken it thence, is only used as a synonym of אָח (cf. Lev. xxv. 15) in the concrete sense of the nearest one. And this is the meaning which it has in the passage before us, where the construct state expresses the relation of apposition, as for example in אִישׁ חֲסִידוֹ (Deut. xxxiii. 8; cf. Ewald, § 287, *e*), the man who is my nearest one. The shepherd of Jehovah, whom Jehovah describes as a man who is His next one (neighbour), cannot of course be a bad shepherd, who is displeasing to Jehovah, and destroys the flock, or the foolish shepherd mentioned in ch. xi. 15–17, as Grotius, Umbr., Ebrard, Ewald, Hitzig, and others suppose; for the expression "man who is my nearest one" implies much more than unity or community of vocation, or that he had to feed the flock like Jehovah. No owner of a flock or lord of a flock would call a hired or purchased shepherd his *'âmīth*. And so God would not apply this epithet to any godly or ungodly man whom He might have appointed shepherd over a nation. The idea of nearest one (or fellow) involves not only similarity in vocation, but community of physical or spiritual descent, according to which he whom God calls His neighbour cannot be a mere man, but can only be one who participates in the divine nature, or is essentially divine. The shepherd of Jehovah, whom the sword is to smite, is therefore no other than the Messiah, who is also identified with Jehovah in ch. xii. 10; or the good shepherd, who says of Himself, "I and my Father are one" (John x. 30). The masculine form הַךְ in the summons addressed to the sword, although חֶרֶב itself is feminine, may be accounted for from the personification of the sword; compare Gen. iv. 7, where sin (חַטָּאת, fem.) is personified as a wild beast, and construed as a masculine. The sword is merely introduced as a weapon used for killing, without there being any intention of defining the mode of death more precisely. The smiting of the shepherd is also mentioned here simply for the purpose of depicting the consequences that would follow with regard to the flock. The thought is therefore merely this: Jehovah will scatter Israel or His nation by smiting the shepherd; that is to say, He will give it up to the misery and destruction to which a flock without a shepherd is exposed. We cannot infer from this that the shepherd himself is to blame; nor does the circumstance that the smiting of the

shepherd is represented as the execution of a divine command, necessarily imply that the death of the shepherd proceeds directly from God. According to the biblical view, God also works, and does that which is done by man in accordance with His counsel and will, and even that which is effected through the sin of men. Thus in Isa. liii. 10 the mortal sufferings of the Messiah are described as inflicted upon Him by God, although He had given up His soul to death to bear the sin of the people. In the prophecy before us, the slaying of the shepherd is only referred to so far as it brings a grievous calamity upon Israel; and the fact is passed over, that Israel has brought this calamity upon itself by its ingratitude towards the shepherd (cf. ch. xi. 8, 12). The flock, which will be dispersed in consequence of the slaying of the shepherd, is the covenant nation, *i.e.* neither the human race nor the Christian church as such, but the flock which the shepherd in ch. xi. 4 sqq. had to feed. At the same time, Jehovah will not entirely withdraw His hand from the scattered flock, but "bring it back over the small ones." The phrase הֵשִׁיב יָד עַל, to bring back the hand over a person (see at 2 Sam. viii. 3), *i.e.* make him the object of his active care once more, is used to express the employment of the hand upon a person either for judgment or salvation. It occurs in the latter sense in Isa. i. 25 in relation to the grace which the Lord will manifest towards Jerusalem, by purifying it from its dross; and it is used here in the same sense, as vers. 8, 9 clearly show, according to which the dispersion to be inflicted upon Israel will only be the cause of ruin to the greater portion of the nation, whereas it will bring salvation to the remnant. Vers. 8*b* and 9 add the real explanation of the bringing back of the hand over the small ones. צְעֲרִים (lit. a participle of צָעַר, which only occurs here) is synonymous with צָעִיר or צָעוֹר (Jer. xiv. 3, xlviii. 4, *chethib*), the small ones in a figurative sense, the miserable ones, those who are called עֲנִיֵּי הַצֹּאן in ch. xi. 7. It naturally follows from this, that the צְעֲרִים are not identical with the whole flock, but simply form a small portion of it, viz. "the poor and righteous in the nation, who suffer injustice" (Hitzig). "The assertion that the flock is to be scattered, but that God will bring back His hand to the small ones, evidently implies that the small ones are included as one portion of the entire flock, for which God will prepare a

different fate from that of the larger whole which is about to be dispersed" (Kliefoth).

On the fulfilment of this verse, we read in Matt. xxvi. 31, 32, and Mark xiv. 27, that the bringing back of the hand of the Lord over the small ones was realized first of all in the case of the apostles. After the institution of the Lord's Supper, Christ told His disciples that that same night they would all be offended because of Him; for it was written, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee." The quotation is made freely from the original text, the address to the sword being resolved into its actual meaning, "I will smite." The offending of the disciples took place when Jesus was taken prisoner, and they all fled. This flight was a prelude to the dispersion of the flock at the death of the shepherd. But the Lord soon brought back His hand over the disciples. The promise, "But after my resurrection I will go before you into Galilee," is a practical exposition of the bringing back of the hand over the small ones, which shows that the expression is to be understood here in a good sense, and that it began to be fulfilled in the gathering together of the disciples by the risen Saviour. This special fulfilment did not indeed exhaust the meaning of the verses before us; but they had a much more general fulfilment in the whole of the nation of Israel, to which we shall afterwards return. This more general sense of the words is placed beyond the reach of doubt by vers. 8 and 9; for ver. 8 depicts the misery which the dispersion of the flock brings upon Israel, and ver. 9 shows how the bringing back of the hand upon the small ones will be realized in the remnant of the nation. The dispersion of the flock will deliver two-thirds of the nation in the whole land to death, so that only one-third will remain alive. כָּל־הָאָרֶץ is not the whole earth, but the whole of the holy land, as in ch. xiv. 9, 10; and הָאָרֶץ, in ch. xii. 12, the land in which the flock, fed by the shepherds of the Lord, *i.e.* the nation of Israel, dwells. פִּי־שְׁנַיִם is taken from Deut. xxi. 17, as in 2 Kings ii. 9; it is used there for the double portion inherited by the first-born. That it is used here to signify two-thirds, is evident from the remaining הַשְּׁלִישִׁית. "The whole of the Jewish nation," says Hengstenberg, "is introduced here, as an inheritance left by the shep-

herd who has been put to death, which inheritance is divided into three parts, death claiming the privileges of the first-born, and so receiving *two* portions, and life one,—a division similar to that which David made in the case of the Moabites (2 Sam. viii. 2)." יִגְוָעוּ is added to יִכָּרֵתוּ, to define יִכָּרֵת more precisely, as signifying not merely a cutting off from the land by transportation (cf. ch. xiv. 2), but a cutting off from life (Koehler). גָּוַע, *exspirare*, is applied both to natural and violent death (for the latter meaning, compare Gen. vii. 21, Josh. xxii. 20). The remaining third is also to be refined through severe afflictions, to purify it from everything of a sinful nature, and make it into a truly holy nation of God. For the figure of melting and refining, compare Isa. i. 25, xlviii. 10, Jer. ix. 6, Mal. iii. 3, Ps. lxvi. 10. For the expression in ver. 9*b*, compare Isa. lxv. 24; and for the thought of the whole verse, ch. viii. 8, Hos. ii. 25, Jer. xxiv. 7, xxx. 22. The cutting off of the two-thirds of Israel commenced in the Jewish war under Vespasian and Titus, and in the war for the suppression of the rebellion led by the pseudo-Messiah *Bar Cochba*. It is not to be restricted to these events, however, but was continued in the persecutions of the Jews with fire and sword in the following centuries. The refinement of the remaining third cannot be taken as referring to the sufferings of the Jewish nation during the whole period of its present dispersion, as C. B. Michaelis supposes, nor generally to the tribulations which are necessary in order to enter into the kingdom of God, to the seven conflicts which the true Israel existing in the Christian church has to sustain, first with the two-thirds, and then and more especially with the heathen (ch. xii. 1–9, 14). For whilst Hengstenberg very properly objects to the view of Michaelis, on the ground that in that case the unbelieving portion of Judaism would be regarded as the legitimate and sole continuation of Israel; it may also be argued, in opposition to the exclusive reference in the third to the Christian church, that it is irreconcilable with the perpetuation of the Jews, and the unanimous entrance of all Israel into the kingdom of Christ, as taught by the Apostle Paul. Both views contain elements of truth, which must be combined, as we shall presently show.

Chap. xiv. All nations will be gathered together by the Lord against Jerusalem, and will take the city and plunder it, and

lead away the half of its inhabitants into captivity (vers. 1, 2). The Lord will then take charge of His people; He will appear upon the Mount of Olives, and by splitting this mountain, prepare a safe way for the rescue of those that remain, and come with all His saints (vers. 3–5) to complete His kingdom. From Jerusalem a stream of salvation and blessing will pour over the whole land (vers. 6–11); the enemies who have come against Jerusalem will be miraculously smitten, and destroy one another (vers. 12–15). The remnant of the nations, however, will turn to the Lord, and come yearly to Jerusalem, to keep the feast of Tabernacles (vers. 16–19); and Jerusalem will become thoroughly holy (vers. 20, 21). From this brief description of the contents, it is perfectly obvious that our chapter contains simply a further expansion of the summary announcement of the judgment upon Israel, and its refinement (xiii. 7–9). Vers. 1, 2 show how the flock is dispersed, and for the most part perishes; vers. 2*b*–5, how the Lord brings back His hand over the small ones; vers. 6–21, how the rescued remnant of the nation is endowed with salvation, and the kingdom of God completed by the reception of the believers out of the heathen nations. There is no essential difference in the fact that the nation of Israel is the object of the prophecy in ch. xiii. 7–9, and Jerusalem in ch. xiv. Jerusalem, as the capital of the kingdom, is the seat of Israel, the nation of God; what happens to it, happens to the people and kingdom of God.

Vers. 1–5. The judgment and the deliverance.—Ver. 1. "*Behold, a day cometh for Jehovah, and thy spoil is divided in the midst of thee.* Ver. 2. *And I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to war; and the city will be taken, and the houses plundered, and the women ravished, and half the city will go out into captivity; but the remnant of the nation will not be cut off out of the city.*" A day comes to the Lord, not inasmuch as He brings it to pass, but rather because the day belongs to Him, since He will manifest His glory upon it (cf. Isa. ii. 12). This day will at first bring calamity or destruction upon Israel; but this calamity will furnish occasion to the Lord to display His divine might and glory, by destroying the enemies of Israel and saving His people. In the second hemistich of ver. 1, Jerusalem is addressed. "Thy spoil" is the booty taken by the

enemy in Jerusalem. The prophet commences directly with the main fact, in a most vivid description, and only gives the explanation afterwards in ver. 2. The *Vav consec.* attached to וְאָסַפְתִּי is also a *Vav explicativum.* The Lord gathers all nations together to war against Jerusalem, and gives up the city into their power, that they may conquer it, and let loose all their barbarity upon it, plundering the houses and ravishing the women (cf. Isa. xiii. 16, where the same thing is affirmed of Babylon). Just as in the Chaldæan conquest the people had been obliged to wander into captivity, so will it be now, though not all the people, but only the half of the city. The remaining portion will not be cut off out of the city, *i.e.* be transported thence, as was the case at that time, when even the remnant of the nation was carried into exile (2 Kings xxv. 22).[3] It is obvious at once from this, that the words do not refer to the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, as Theodoret, Jerome, and others have supposed.

This time the Lord will come to the help of His people. Ver. 3. "*And Jehovah will go forth and fight against those nations, as in His day of battle, on the day of slaughter.* Ver. 4. *And His feet will stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which lies to the east before Jerusalem; and the Mount of Olives will split in the centre from east to west into a very great valley, and half of the mountain will remove to the north, and its (other) half to the south.* Ver. 5. *And ye will flee into the valley of my mountains, and the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel, and ye will flee as ye fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. And Jehovah my God will come, all the saints with Thee.*" Against those nations which have conquered Jerusalem the Lord will fight כְּיוֹם וגו׳, as the day, *i.e.* as on the day, of His fighting, to which there is added, for the purpose of strengthening the expression, "on the day of the slaughter." The meaning is not "according to the day when He fought in the day of the war," as Jerome and many others suppose, who refer the words to the conflict between Jehovah and the Egyptians at the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 14); for there is nothing to support this special allusion. According to the historical accounts in the Old Testament, Jehovah went out more than once to fight for His people (cf. Josh. x. 14, 42, xxiii. 3; Judg. iv. 15; 1 Sam. vii. 10; 2 Chron. xx. 15).

The simile is therefore to be taken in a more general sense, as signifying "as He is accustomed to fight in the day of battle and slaughter," and to be understood as referring to all the wars of the Lord on behalf of His people. In vers. 4 and 5 we have first of all a description of what the Lord will do to save the remnant of His people. He appears upon the Mount of Olives, and as His feet touch the mountain it splits in half, so that a large valley is formed. The splitting of the mountain is the effect of the earthquake under the footsteps of Jehovah, before whom the earth trembles when He touches it (cf. Ex. xix. 18; Judg. v. 5; Ps. lxviii. 8; Nah. i. 5, etc.). The more precise definition of the situation of the Mount of Olives, viz. "before Jerusalem eastwards," is not introduced with a geographical purpose—namely, to distinguish it from other mountains upon which olive trees grow—but is connected with the means employed by the Lord for the salvation of His people, for whom He opens a way of escape by splitting the mountain in two. The mountain is split מַחֲצִיתוֹ מִזְרָחָה וְיָמָּה, from the half (*i.e.* the midst) of it to the east and to the west, *i.e.* so that a chasm ensues, which runs from the centre of the mountain both eastwards and westwards; so that the mountain is split latitudinally, one half (as is added to make it still more clear) removing to the south, the other to the north, and a great valley opening between them. Into this valley the half of the nation that is still in Jerusalem will flee. גֵּיא הָרַי is the accusative of direction (Luther and others render it incorrectly, "before the valley of my mountains"). This valley is not the valley of the *Tyropœon*, or the valley between Moriah and Zion (Jerome, Drus., Hofm.), but the valley which has been formed by the splitting of the Mount of Olives; and Jehovah calls the two mountains which have been formed through His power out of the Mount of Olives *hârai*, "my mountains." Nor is it connected with the valley of Jehoshaphat; for the opinion that the newly-formed valley is merely an extension of the valley of Jehoshaphat has no foundation in the text, and is not in harmony with the direction taken by the new valley—namely, from east to west. The explanatory clause which follows, "for the (newly-formed) valley of the mountains will reach אָצַל," shows that the flight of the people into the valley is not to be understood as signifying that the valley will merely

furnish the fugitives with a level road for escape, but that they will find a secure place of shelter in the valley. *'El 'Atsal* has been taken by different commentators, after Symm. and Jerome, in an appellative sense, "to very near," which Koehler interprets as signifying that the valley will reach to the place where the fugitives are. This would be to Jerusalem, for that was where the fugitives were then. But if Zechariah had meant to say this, he could not have spoken more obscurely. *'Atsal*, the form in pause for *'âtsēl*, as we may see by comparing 1 Chron. viii. 38 and ix. 44 with 1 Chron. viii. 39 and ix. 43 (cf. Olsh. *Gramm.* § 91, *d*), is only met with elsewhere in the form אֵצֶל, not merely as a preposition, but also in the name בֵּית־הָאֵצֶל, and is here a proper name, as most of the ancient translators perceived,—namely, a contracted form of בֵּית־הָאֵצֶל, since בֵּית is frequently omitted from names of places constructed with it (see Ges. *Thes.* p. 193). This place is to be sought for, according to Mic. i. 11, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, and according to the passage before us to the east of the Mount of Olives, as Cyril states, though from mere hearsay, *κώμη δὲ αὕτη πρὸς ἑσχατιαῖς, ὡς λόγος, τοῦ ὄρους κειμένη*. The fact that Jerome does not mention the place is no proof that it did not exist. A small place not far from Jerusalem, on the other side of the Mount of Olives, might have vanished from the earth long before this father lived. The comparison of the flight to the flight from the earthquake in the time of king Uzziah, to which reference is made in Amos i. 1, is intended to express not merely the swiftness and universality of the flight, but also the cause of the flight,—namely, that they do not merely fly from the enemy, but also for fear of the earthquake which will attend the coming of the Lord. In the last clause of ver. 5 the object of the coming of the Lord is indicated. He has not only gone forth to fight against the enemy in Jerusalem, and deliver His people; but He comes with His holy angels, to perfect His kingdom by means of the judgment, and to glorify Jerusalem. This coming is not materially different from His going out to war (ver. 3); it is not another or a second coming, but simply a visible manifestation. For this coming believers wait, because it brings them redemption (Luke xxi. 28). This joyful waiting is expressed in the address "my God." The holy ones are the angels (cf. Deut.

xxxiii. 2, 3; Dan. vii. 9, 10; Matt. xxv. 31), not believers, or believers as well as the angels. In what follows, Zechariah depicts first of all the completion secured by the coming of the Lord (vers. 6–11), and then the judgment upon the enemy (vers. 12–15), with its fruits and consequences (vers. 16–21).

Vers. 6–11. Complete salvation.—Ver. 6. "*And it will come to pass on that day, there will not be light, the glorious ones will melt away.* Ver. 7. *And it will be an only day, which will be known to Jehovah, not day nor night: and it will come to pass, at evening time it will be light.*" The coming of the Lord will produce a change on the earth. The light of the earth will disappear. The way in which לֹא יִהְיֶה אוֹר is to be understood is indicated more precisely by יִקְרוֹת יִקְפָּאוֹן. These words have been interpreted, however, from time immemorial in very different ways. The difference of gender in the combination of the feminine יְקָרוֹת with the masculine verb יִקְפָּאוֹן, and the rarity with which the two words are met with, have both contributed to produce the *keri* יְקָרוֹת וְקִפְאוֹן, in which יְקָרוֹת has either been taken as a substantive formation from קָרַר, or the reading וְקָרוֹת with *Vav cop.* has been adopted in the sense of cold, and קִפְאוֹן (contraction, rigidity) taken to signify ice. The whole clause has then been either regarded as an antithesis to the preceding one, "It will not be light, but (*sc.* there will be) cold and ice" (thus Targ., Pesh., Symm., Itala, Luther, and many others); or taken in this sense, "There will not be light, and cold, and ice, *i.e.* no alternation of light, cold, and ice will occur" (Ewald, Umbr., Bunsen). But there is intolerable harshness in both these views: in the first, on account of the insertion of יִהְיֶה without a negation for the purpose of obtaining an antithesis; in the second, because the combination of light, cold, and ice is illogical and unparalleled in the Scriptures, and cannot be justified even by an appeal to Gen. viii. 22, since light is no more equivalent to day and night than cold and ice are to frost and heat, or summer and winter. We must therefore follow Hengstenberg, Hofmann, Kochler, and Kliefoth, who prefer the *chethib* יקפאון, and read it יִקְפָּאוֹן, the imperf. *kal* of קָפָא. קָפָא signifies to congeal, or curdle, and is applied in Ex. xv. 8 to the heaping up of the waters as it were in solid masses. יְקָרוֹת, the costly or splendid things, are the stars, according to Job xxxi. 26, where the moon is

spoken of as יָקָר הוֹלֵךְ, walking in splendour. The words therefore describe the passing away or vanishing of the brightness of the shining stars, answering to the prophetic announcement, that on the day of judgment, sun, moon, and stars will lose their brightness or be turned into darkness (Joel iv. 15; Isa. xiii. 10; Ezek. xxxii. 7, 8; Matt. xxiv. 29; Rev. vi. 12). In ver. 7 this day is still more clearly described: first, as solitary in its kind; and secondly, as a marvellous day, on which the light dawns at evening time. The four clauses of this verse contain only two thoughts; each so expressed in two clauses that the second explains the first. יוֹם אֶחָד, *unus dies*, is not equivalent to *tempus non longum* (Cocceius, Hengst.), nor to "only one day, not two or more" (Koehler), but solitary in its kind, unparalleled by any other, because no second of the kind ever occurs (for the use of *'echâd* in this sense, compare ver. 9, Ezek. vii. 5, Song of Sol. vi. 9). It is necessary to take the words in this manner on account of the following clause, "it will be known to the Lord;" *i.e.* not "it will be singled out by Jehovah in the series of days as the appropriate one" (Hitzig and Koehler), nor "it stands under the supervision and guidance of the Lord, so that it does not come unexpectedly, or interfere with His plans" (Hengstenberg), for neither of these is expressed in נוֹדַע; but simply, it is known to the Lord according to its true nature, and therefore is distinguished above all other days. The following definition, "not day and not night," does not mean that "it will form a turbid mixture of day and night, in which there will prevail a mongrel condition of mysterious, horrifying twilight and gloom" (Koehler); but it will resemble neither day nor night, because the lights of heaven, which regulate day and night, lose their brightness, and at evening time there comes not darkness, but light. The order of nature is reversed: the day resembles the night, and the evening brings light. At the time when, according to the natural course of events, the dark night should set in, a bright light will dawn. The words do not actually affirm that the alternation of day and night will cease (Jerome, Neumann, Kliefoth); but this may be inferred from a comparison of Rev. xxi. 23 and 25.

Ver. 8. "*And it will come to pass in that day, that living waters will go out from Jerusalem; by half into the eastern sea,*

and by half into the western sea: in summer and in winter will it be. Ver. 9. *And Jehovah will be King over all the land; in that day will Jehovah be one, and His name one.* Ver. 10. *The whole land will turn as the plain from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem; and this will be high, and dwell in its place, from the gate of Benjamin to the place of the first gate, to the corner gate, and from the tower of Chananeel to the king's wine-presses.* Ver. 11. *And men will dwell therein, and there will be no more curse* (*ban*); *and Jerusalem will dwell securely.*" The living water which issues from Jerusalem, and pours over the land on both sides, flowing both into the eastern or Dead Sea, and into the hinder (*i.e.* western) or Mediterranean Sea (see at Joel ii. 20), is, according to Joel iii. 18 and Ezek. xlvii. 1–12, a figurative representation of the salvation and blessing which will flow out of Jerusalem, the centre of the kingdom of God, over the holy land, and produce vigorous life on every hand. According to Joel and Ezekiel, the water issues from the temple (see at Joel iii. 18). Zechariah adds, that this will take place in summer and winter, *i.e.* will proceed without interruption throughout the whole year, whereas natural streams dry up in summer time in Palestine. To this blessing there is added the higher spiritual blessing, that Jehovah will be King over all the land, and His name alone will be mentioned and revered. כָּל־הָאָרֶץ does not mean the whole earth, but, as in vers. 8 and 10, the whole of the land of Canaan or of Israel, which is bounded by the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean. It by no means follows from this, however, that Zechariah is simply speaking of a glorification of Palestine. For Canaan, or the land of Israel, is a type of the kingdom of God in the full extent which it will have on the earth in the last days depicted here. Jehovah's kingship does not refer to the kingdom of nature, but to the kingdom of grace,—namely, to the perfect realization of the sovereignty of God, for which the old covenant prepared the way; whereas the old Israel continually rebelled against Jehovah's being King, both by its sin and its idolatry. This rebellion, *i.e.* the apostasy of the nation from its God, is to cease, and the Lord alone will be King and God of the redeemed nation, and be acknowledged by it; His name alone will be mentioned, and not the names of idols as well. The earthly soil of the kingdom of God will then experience

a change. The whole land will be levelled into a plain, and Jerusalem will be elevated in consequence; and Jerusalem, when thus exalted, will be restored in its fullest extent. יִסַּב (imperf. *kal*, not *niphal;* see Ges. § 67, 5), to change like the plain, *i.e.* to change so as to become like the plain. הָעֲרָבָה is not a plain generally, in which case the article would be used generically, but *the* plain, so called *κατ' ἐξοχην*, the plain of the Jordan, or the Ghor (see at Deut. i. 1). The definition "from Geba to Rimmon" does not belong to כָּעֲרָבָה (Umbreit, Neum., Klief.), but to כָּל־הָאָרֶץ; for there was no plain between Geba and Rimmon, but only an elevated, hilly country. *Geba* is the present *Jeba*, about three hours to the north of Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 24), and was the northern frontier city of the kingdom of Judah (2 Kings xxiii. 8). *Rimmon*, which is distinguished by the clause "to the south of Jerusalem" from the Rimmon in Galilee, the present *Rummaneh* to the north of Nazareth (see at Josh. xix. 13), and from the rock of Rimmon, the present village of *Rummon*, about fifteen Roman miles to the north of Jerusalem (see Judg. xx. 45), is the *Rimmon* situated on the border of Edom, which was given up by the tribe of Judah to the Simeonites (Josh. xv. 32, xix. 7), probably on the site of the present ruins of *Um er Rummanim*, four hours to the north of Beersheba (see at Josh. xv. 32). To וְרָאמָה וגו' we must supply as the subject *Jerusalem*, which has been mentioned just before. ראמה is probably only an outwardly expanded form of רָמָה from רום, like קָאם in Hos. x. 14. The whole land will be lowered, that Jerusalem alone may be high. This is, of course, not to be understood as signifying a physical elevation caused by the depression of the rest of the land; but the description is a figurative one, like the exaltation of the temple mountain above all the mountains in Mic. iv. 1. Jerusalem, as the residence of the God-King, is the centre of the kingdom of God; and in the future this is to tower high above all the earth. The figurative description is attached to the natural situation of Jerusalem, which stood upon a broad mountain ridge, and was surrounded by mountains, which were loftier than the city (see Robinson, *Palestine*). The exaltation is a figurative representation of the spiritual elevation and glory which it is to receive. Moreover, Jerusalem is to dwell on its ancient

site (יָשַׁב תַּחְתֶּיהָ, as in ch. xii. 6). The meaning of this is not that the exaltation above the surrounding land will be the only alteration that will take place in its situation (Koehler); but, as a comparison with Jer. xxxi. 38 clearly shows, that the city will be restored or rebuilt in its former extent, and therefore is to be completely recovered from the ruin brought upon it by conquest and plunder (ver. 1). The boundaries of the city that are mentioned here cannot be determined with perfect certainty. The first definitions relate to the extent of the city from east to west. The starting-point (for the use of לְמָן, see Hag. ii. 18) is Benjamin's gate, in the north wall, through which the road to Benjamin and thence to Ephraim ran, so that it was no doubt the same as Ephraim's gate mentioned in 2 Kings xiv. 13 and Neh. viii. 16. The *terminus ad quem*, on the other hand, is doubtful, viz. "to the place of the first gate, to the corner gate." According to the grammatical construction, עַד־שַׁעַר הַפִּנּוֹת is apparently in apposition to עַד־מְקוֹם שַׁעַר הָרִ֣אשׁוֹן, or a more precise description of the position of the first gate; and Hitzig and Kliefoth have taken the words in this sense. Only we cannot see any reason why the statement "to the place of the first gate" should be introduced at all, if the other statement "to the corner gate" describes the very same terminal point, and that in a clearer manner. We must therefore assume, as the majority of commentators have done, that the two definitions refer to two different terminal points; in other words, that they define the extent both eastwards and westwards from the Benjamin's gate, which stood near the centre of the north wall. The corner gate (*sha'ar happinnīm* is no doubt the same as *sha'ar happinnâh* in 2 Kings xiv. 13 and Jer. xxxi. 38) was at the western corner of the north wall. "The first gate" is supposed to be identical with שַׁעַר הַיָּשָׁן, the gate of the old (city), in Neh. iii. 6 and xii. 39, and its place at the north-eastern corner of the city. The definitions which follow give the extent of the city from north to south. We must supply מִן before מִגְדַּל. The tower of *Hananeel* (Jer. xxxi. 38; Neh. iii. 1, xii. 39) stood at the north-east corner of the city (see at Neh. iii. 1). The king's wine-presses were unquestionably in the king's gardens at the south side of the city (Neh. iii. 15). In the city so glorified the inhabitants dwell (יָשְׁבוּ in contrast to going

out as captives or as fugitives, vers. 2 and 5), and that as a holy nation, for there will be no more any ban in the city. The ban presupposes sin, and is followed by extermination as a judgment (cf. Josh. vi. 18). The city and its inhabitants will therefore be no more exposed to destruction, but will dwell safely, and have no more hostile attacks to fear (cf. Isa. lxv. 18 sqq. and Rev. xxii. 3).

Vers. 12–15. Punishment of the hostile nations.—Ver. 12. "*And this will be the stroke wherewith Jehovah will smite all the nations which have made war upon Jerusalem: its flesh will rot while it stands upon its feet, and its eyes will rot in their sockets, and its tongue will rot in their mouth.* Ver. 13. *And it will come to pass in that day, the confusion from Jehovah will be great among them, and they will lay hold of one another's hand, and his hand will rise up against the hand of his neighbour.* Ver. 14. *And Judah will also fight at Jerusalem, and the riches of all nations will be gathered together round about, gold and silver and clothes in great abundance.* Ver. 15. *And so will be the stroke of the horse, of the mule, of the camel, and of the ass, and of all the cattle, that shall be in the same tents, like this stroke.*" To the description of the salvation there is appended here as the obverse side the execution of the punishment upon the foe, which was only indicated in ver. 3. The nations which made war against Jerusalem shall be destroyed partly by the rotting away of their bodies even while they are alive (ver. 12), partly by mutual destruction (ver. 13), and partly by Judah's fighting against them (ver. 14). To express the idea of their utter destruction, all the different kinds of plagues and strokes by which nations can be destroyed are grouped together. In the first rank we have two extraordinary strokes inflicted upon them by God. *Maggēphâh* always denotes a plague or punishment sent by God (Ex. ix. 14; Num. xiv. 37; 1 Sam. vi. 4). מַקֵּק, the inf. abs. *hiphil* in the place of the finite verb: "He (Jehovah) makes its flesh rot while it stands upon its feet," *i.e.* He causes putrefaction to take place even while the body is alive. The singular suffixes are to be taken distributively: the flesh of every nation or every foe. To strengthen the threat there is added the rotting of the eyes which spied out the nakednesses of the city of God, and of the tongue which blasphemed God and His people (cf. Isa. xxxvii. 6). The other kind of destruc-

tion is effected by a panic terror, through which the foes are thrown into confusion, so that they turn their weapons against one another and destroy one another,—an occurrence of which several examples are furnished by the Israelitish history (compare Judg. vii. 22, 1 Sam. xiv. 20, and especially that in 2 Chron. xx. 23, in the reign of Jehoshaphat, to which the description given by our prophet refers). The grasp of the other's hand is a hostile one in this case, the object being to seize him, and, having lifted his hand, to strike him dead. Ver. 14*a* is translated by Luther and many others, after the Targum and Vulgate, "Judah will fight *against* Jerusalem," on the ground that נִלְחַם בְּ generally signifies "to fight against a person." But this by no means suits the context here, since those who fight against Jerusalem are "all the heathen" (ver. 2), and nothing is said about any opposition between Jerusalem and Judah. ב is used here in a local sense, as in Ex. xvii. 8, with נִלְחַם, and the thought is this: Not only will Jehovah smite the enemies miraculously with plagues and confusion, but Judah will also take part in the conflict against them, and fight against them in Jerusalem, which they have taken. *Judah* denotes the whole of the covenant nation, and not merely the inhabitants of the country in distinction from the inhabitants of the capital. Thus will Judah seize as booty the costly possessions of the heathen, and thereby visit the heathen with ample retribution for the plundering of Jerusalem (ver. 2). And the destruction of the enemy will be so complete, that even their beasts of burden, and those used in warfare, and all their cattle, will be destroyed by the same plague as the men; just as in the case of the ban, not only the men, but also their cattle, were put to death (cf. Josh. vii. 24). Moreover, there is hardly any need for the express remark, that this description is only a rhetorically individualizing amplification of the thought that the enemies of the kingdom of God are to be utterly destroyed, —namely, those who do not give up their hostility and turn unto God. For the verses which follow show very clearly that it is only to these that the threat of punishment refers.

Vers. 16–19. Conversion of the heathen.—Ver. 16. "*And it will come to pass, that every remnant of all the nations which came against Jerusalem will go up year by year to worship the King Jehovah of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.* Ver.

17. *And it will come to pass, that whoever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King Jehovah of hosts, upon them there will be no rain.* Ver. 18. *And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, then also not upon them; there will be (upon them) the plague with which Jehovah will plague all nations which do not go up to keep the feast of tabernacles.* Ver. 19. *This will be the sin of Egypt, and the sin of all the nations, which do not go up to keep the feast of tabernacles.*" The heathen will not be all destroyed by the judgment; but a portion of them will be converted. This portion is called "the whole remnant of those who marched against Jerusalem" (בּוֹא עַל as in ch. xii. 9). It will turn to the worship of the Lord. The construction in ver. 16 is anacoluthic: כָּל־הַנּוֹתָר, with its further definition, is placed at the head absolutely, whilst the predicate is attached in the form of an apodosis with וְעָלוּ. The entrance of the heathen into the kingdom of God is depicted under the figure of the festal journeys to the sanctuary of Jehovah, which had to be repeated year by year. Of the feasts which they will keep there every year (on מִדֵּי, see Delitzsch on Isa. lxvi. 23), the feast of tabernacles is mentioned, not because it occurred in the autumn, and the autumn was the best time for travelling (Theod. Mops., Theodoret, Grot., Ros.), or because it was the greatest feast of rejoicing kept by the Jews, or for any other outward reason, but simply on account of its internal significance, which we must not seek for, however, as Koehler does, in its agrarian importance as a feast of thanksgiving for the termination of the harvest, and of the gathering in of the fruit; but rather in its historical allusion as a feast of thanksgiving for the gracious protection of Israel in its wanderings through the desert, and its introduction into the promised land with its abundance of glorious blessings, whereby it foreshadowed the blessedness to be enjoyed in the kingdom of God (see my *bibl. Archäologie*, i. p. 414 sqq.). This feast will be kept by the heathen who have come to believe in the living God, to thank the Lord for His grace, that He has brought them out of the wanderings of this life into the blessedness of His kingdom of peace. With this view of the significance of the feast of tabernacles, it is also possible to harmonize the punishment threatened in ver. 17 for neglecting to keep this feast,—namely, that the rain will not be (come)

upon the families of the nations which absent themselves from this feast. For rain is an individualizing expression denoting the blessing of God generally, and is mentioned here with reference to the fact, that without rain the fruits of the land, on the enjoyment of which our happiness depends, will not flourish. The meaning of the threat is, therefore, that those families which do not come to worship the Lord, will be punished by Him with the withdrawal of the blessings of His grace. The Egyptians are mentioned again, by way of example, as those upon whom the punishment will fall. So far as the construction of this verse is concerned, וְלֹא בָאָה is added to strengthen לֹא תַעֲלֶה, and לֹא עֲלֵיהֶם contains the apodosis to the conditional clause introduced with אִם, to which יִהְיֶה הַנֶּגֶף is easily supplied from ver. 17. The positive clause which follows is then appended as an asyndeton: It (the fact that the rain does not come) will be the plague, etc. The prophet mentions Egypt especially, not because of the fact in natural history, that this land owes its fertility not to the rain, but to the overflowing of the Nile, —a notion which has given rise to the most forced interpretations; but as the nation which showed the greatest hostility to Jehovah and His people in the olden time, and for the purpose of showing that this nation was also to attain to a full participation in the blessings of salvation bestowed upon Israel (cf. Isa. xix. 19 sqq.). In ver. 19 this thought is rounded off by way of conclusion. זֹאת, this, namely the fact that no rain falls, will be the sin of Egypt, etc. חַטָּאת, the sin, including its consequences, or in its effects, as in Num. xxxii. 23, etc. Moreover, we must not infer from the way in which this is carried out in vers. 17–19, that at the time of the completion of the kingdom of God there will still be heathen, who will abstain from the worship of the true God; but the thought is simply this: there will then be no more room for heathenism within the sphere of the kingdom of God. To this there is appended the thought, in vers. 20 and 21, that everything unholy will then be removed from that kingdom.

Ver. 20. "*In that day there will stand upon the bells of the horses, Holy to Jehovah; and the pots in the house of Jehovah will be like the sacrificial bowls before the altar.* Ver. 21. *And every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to Jehovah of hosts, and all who sacrifice will come and take of them, and boil*

therein; and there will be no Canaanite any more in the house of Jehovah of hosts in that day." The meaning of ver. 20*a* is not exhausted by the explanation given by Michaelis, Ewald, and others, that even the horses will then be consecrated to the Lord. The words קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה were engraven upon the gold plate on the tiara of the high priest, in the characters used in engravings upon a seal (Ex. xxviii. 36). If, then, these words are (*i.e.* are to stand) upon the bells of the horses, the meaning is, that the bells of the horses will resemble the head-dress of the high priest in holiness.[1] This does not merely express the fact that the whole of the ceremonial law will be abolished, but also that the distinction between holy and profane will cease, inasmuch as even the most outward things, and things having no connection whatever with worship, will be as holy as those objects formerly were, which were dedicated to the service of Jehovah by a special consecration. In vers. 20*b* and 21*a*, the graduated distinction between the things which were more or less holy is brought prominently out. The pots in the sanctuary, which were used for boiling the sacrificial flesh, were regarded as much less holy than the sacrificial bowls in which the blood of the sacrificial animals was received, and out of which it was sprinkled or poured upon the altar. In the future these pots will be just as holy as the sacrificial bowls; and indeed not merely the boiling pots in the temple, but all the boiling pots in Jerusalem and Judah, which have hitherto been only clean and not holy, so that men will use them at pleasure for boiling the sacrificial flesh. In this priestly-levitical drapery the thought is expressed, that in the perfected kingdom of God not only will everything without exception be holy, but all will be equally holy. The distinction between holy and profane can only cease, however, when the sin and moral defilement which first evoked this distinction, and made it necessary that the things intended for the service of God should be set apart, and receive a special consecration, have been entirely removed and wiped away. To remove this distinction, to pre-

[1] It follows from this passage, that it was an Israelitish custom to hang bells upon the horses and mules as ornaments, and probably also for other purposes, as with us. This custom was a very common one in antiquity (see the proofs which have been so diligently collected in *Dougtæi Analecta sacr.* p. 296 sqq.).

pare the way for the cleansing away of sin, and to sanctify once more that which sin had desecrated, was the object of the sacred institutions appointed by God. To this end Israel was separated from the nations of the earth; and in order to train it up as a holy nation, and to secure the object described, a law was given to it, in which the distinction between holy and profane ran through all the relations of life. And this goal will be eventually reached by the people of God; and sin with all its consequences be cleansed away by the judgment. In the perfected kingdom of God there will be no more sinners, but only such as are righteous and holy. This is affirmed in the last clause: there will be no Canaanite any more in the house of Jehovah. The Canaanites are mentioned here, not as merchants, as in Zeph. i. 11, Hos. xii. 8 (as Jonathan, Aquila, and others suppose), but as a people laden with sin, and under the curse (Gen. ix. 25; Lev. xviii. 24 sqq.; Deut. vii. 2, ix. 4, etc.), which has been exterminated by the judgment. In this sense, as the expression לֹא עוֹד implies, the term Canaanite is used to denote the godless members of the covenant nation, who came to the temple with sacrifices, in outward self-righteousness. As עוֹד presupposes that there were Canaanites in the temple of Jehovah in the time of the prophet, the reference cannot be to actual Canaanites, because they were prohibited by the law from entering the temple, but only to Israelites, who were Canaanites in heart. Compare Isa. i. 10, where the princes of Judah are called princes of Sodom (Ezek. xvi. 3, xliv. 9). The "house of Jehovah" is the temple, as in the preceding verse, and not the church of Jehovah, as in ch. ix. 8, although at the time of the completion of the kingdom of God the distinction between Jerusalem and the temple will have ceased, and the whole of the holy city, yea, the whole of the kingdom of God, will be transformed by the Lord into a holy of holies (see Rev. xxi. 22, 27).

Thus does our prophecy close with a prospect of the completion of the kingdom of God in glory. All believing commentators are agreed that the final fulfilment of vers. 20 and 21 lies before us in Rev. xxi. 27 and xxii. 15, and that even ch. xii. neither refers to the Chaldæan catastrophe nor to the Maccabæan wars, but to the Messianic times, however they may differ from one another in relation to the historical events

which the prophecy foretels. Hofmann and Koehler, as well as Ebrard and Kliefoth, start with the assumption, that the prophecy in ch. xii.–xiv. strikes in where the preceding one in ch. ix.–xi. terminates; that is to say, that it commences with the time when Israel was given up to the power of the fourth empire, on account of its rejection of the good shepherd, who appeared in Christ. Now since Hofmann and Koehler understand by Israel only the chosen people of the old covenant, or the Jewish nation, and by Jerusalem the capital of this nation in Palestine, they find this prophecy in ch. xii., that when Jehovah shall eventually bring to pass the punishment of the bad shepherd, *i.e.* of the imperial power, with its hostility to God, it will assemble together again in its members the nations of the earth, to make war upon the material Jerusalem and Israel, which has returned again from its dispersion in all the world into the possession of the holy land (Palestine), and will besiege the holy city; but it will there be smitten by Jehovah, and lose its power over Israel. At that time will Jehovah also bring the previous hardening of Israel to an end, open its eyes to its sin against the Saviour it has put to death, and effect its conversion. But they differ in opinion as to ch. xiv. According to Koehler, this chapter refers to a future which is still in the distance—to a siege and conquest of Jerusalem which are to take place after Israel's conversion, through which the immediate personal appearance of Jehovah will be brought to pass, and all the effects by which that appearance is necessarily accompanied. According to Hofmann (*Schriftbeweis*, ii. p. 610 sqq.), ch. xiv. 1 sqq. refers to the same occurrence as ch. xii. 2 sqq., with this simple difference, that in ch. xii. the prophet states what that day, in which the whole of the world of nations attacks Jerusalem, will do with the people of God, and in ch. xiv. to what extremity it will be brought. Ebrard and Kliefoth, on the other hand, understand by *Israel*, with its capital Jerusalem, and the house of David (in ch. xii. 1-xiii. 6), rebellious Judaism after the rejection of the Messiah; and by *Judah* with its princes, Christendom. Hence the prophecy in this section announces what calamities will happen to Israel according to the flesh—that has become rebellious through rejecting the Messiah—from the first coming of Christ onwards, until its ultimate conversion after the fulness of the Gentiles has come

in.[1] The section ch. xiii. 7–9 (the smiting of the shepherd) does not refer to the crucifixion of Christ, because this did not lead to the consequences indicated in ver. 8, so far as the whole earth was concerned, but to the "cutting off of the Messiah" predicted in Dan. ix. 26, the great apostasy which forms the beginning of the end, according to Luke xvii. 25, 2 Thess. ii. 3, 1 Tim. iv. 1, and 2 Tim. iii. 1, and through which Christ in His church is, according to the description in Rev. xiii. 17, so cut off from historical life, that it cannot be anything on earth. Lastly, chap. xiv. treats of the end of the world and the general judgment.

Of these two views, we cannot look upon either as well founded. For, in the first place, the assumption common to the two, and with which they set out, is erroneous and untenable, —namely, that the prophecy in ch. xii. sqq. strikes in where the previous one in ch. ix.–xi. terminated, and therefore that ch. xii.–xiv. is a direct continuation of ch. ix.–xi. This assumption is at variance not only with the relation in which the two prophecies stand to one another, as indicated by the correspondence in their headings, and as unfolded in ch. xii. 1 and 2 (p. 380 f., comp. p. 320), but also with the essence of the prophecy, inasmuch as it is not a historical prediction of the future according to its successive development, but simply a spiritual intuition effected by inspiration, in which only the leading features of the form which the kingdom of God would hereafter assume are set forth, and that in figures drawn from the circumstances of the present and the past. Again, the two views can only be carried out by forcing the text. If the prophecy in ch. xii. started with the period when Israel came into the power of the Roman empire after the rejection of the Messiah, it could not

[1] Kliefoth accordingly finds the siege of Jerusalem, predicted in ch. xii. 2, fulfilled in the siege of that city by Titus. The besieging nations then drank the reeling-cup; for the subjection of Judah was the last act in the victory of the Roman empire over the Macedonian. Rome was then at the summit of its imperial greatness; and from that time forth it became reeling and weak. This weakening was indeed prepared and effected through the Christian church; but it was just the siege of Jerusalem which transferred the centre of the Christian church from Jerusalem to the Roman empire. The fulfilment of ch. xii. 3 is to be found in the Crusades, the Oriental question, the Haute Finance, and the Emancipation of the Jews. Jerusalem has thus become a burden-stone for all nations, etc.

leap so abruptly to the last days, as Hofmann and Koehler assume, and commence with the description of a victorious conflict on the part of Israel against the nations of the world that were besieging Jerusalem, but would certainly first of all predict, if not the destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans (which is merely indicated in ch. xi.), at all events the gathering together of the Jews, who had been scattered by the Romans over all the world, into Palestine and Jerusalem, before an attack of the nations of the world upon Israel could possibly be spoken of. Moreover, even the difference between Hofmann and Koehler with regard to the relation between ch. xii. 1–9 and ch. xiv. 1–5 shows that the transference of the whole to the last times cannot be reconciled with the words of these sections. The hypothesis of Koehler, that after the gathering together of Israel out of its dispersion, the nations of the world would make an attack upon Jerusalem in which they would be defeated, and that this conflict would for the first time bring Israel to the recognition of its guilt in putting Christ to death, is at variance with the whole of the prophecy and teaching of both the Old and New Testaments. For, according to these, Israel is not to be gathered together from its dispersion among the nations till it shall return with penitence to Jehovah, whom it has rejected. But Hofmann's statement as to the relation between the two sections is so brief and obscure, that it is more like a concealment than a clearing up of the difficulties which it contains. Lastly, when Hofmann correctly observes, that "by the *Israel* of the heading in ch. xii. 1 we can only understand the people of God, in contradistinction to the world of nations, which is estranged from God," this cannot apply to the unbelieving Jews, who have been given into the power of the last empire on account of their rejection of Christ, or Israel according to the flesh, for that Israel is rejected by God. The people of God exists, since the rejection of Christ, only in Christendom, which has been formed out of believing Jews and believing Gentiles, or the church of the New Testament, the stem and kernel of which were that portion of Israel which believingly accepted the Messiah when He appeared, and into whose bosom the believing Gentile peoples were received. Ebrard and Kliefoth are therefore perfectly right in their rejection of the Jewish chiliasm of Hofmann and Koehler;

but when they understand by the Israel of the heading belonging to ch. xii.-xiv., which we find in ch. xii. 1-9, only the unbelieving carnal Israel, and by that in ch. xiv. the believing Israel which has been converted to Christ, and also introduce into ch. xii. 1-9 an antithesis between Israel and Judah, and then understand by Jerusalem and the house of David in ch. xii. the hardened Jews, and by Judah, Christendom; and, on the other hand, by Jerusalem and Judah in ch. xiv. the Christendom formed of believing Jews and believing Gentiles,—we have already shown at ch. xii. 10 (p. 387) that these distinctions are arbitrarily forced upon the text.

Our prophecy treats in both parts—ch. xii. 1-xiii. 6 and ch. xiii. 7-xiv. 21—of Israel, the people of God, and indeed the people of the new covenant, which has grown out of the Israel that believed in Christ, and believers of the heathen nations incorporated into it, and refers not merely to the church of the new covenant in the last times, when all the old Israel will be liberated by the grace of God from the hardening inflicted upon it, and will be received again into the kingdom of God, and form a central point thereof (Vitringa, C. B. Mich., etc.), but to the whole development of the church of Christ from its first beginning till its completion at the second coming of the Lord, as Hengstenberg has in the main discovered and observed. As the Israel of the heading (ch. xii. 1) denotes the people of God in contradistinction to the peoples of the world, the inhabitants of Jerusalem with the house of David, and Judah with its princes, as the representatives of Israel, are typical epithets applied to the representatives and members of the new covenant people, viz. the Christian church; and Jerusalem and Judah, as the inheritance of Israel, are types of the seats and territories of Christendom. The development of the new covenant nation, however, in conflict with the heathen world, and through the help of the Lord and His Spirit, until its glorious completion, is predicted in our oracle, not according to its successive historical course, but in such a manner that the first half announces how the church of the Lord victoriously defeats the attacks of the heathen world through the miraculous help of the Lord, and how in consequence of this victory it is increased by the fact that the hardened Israel comes more and more to the acknowledgment of its sin and to

belief in the Messiah, whom it has put to death, and is incorporated into the church; whilst the second half, on the other hand, announces how, in consequence of the slaying of the Messiah, there falls upon the covenant nation a judgment through which two-thirds are exterminated, and the remainder is tested and refined by the Lord, so that, although many do indeed fall and perish in the conflicts with the nations of the world, the remnant is preserved, and in the last conflict will be miraculously delivered through the coming of the Lord, who will come with His saints to complete His kingdom in glory by the destruction of the enemies of His kingdom, and by the transformation and renewal of the earth. As the believing penitential look at the pierced One (xii. 10) will not take place for the first time at the ultimate conversion of Israel at the end of the days, but began on the day of Golgotha, and continues through all the centuries of the Christian church, so did the siege of Jerusalem by all nations (ch. xii. 1–9), *i.e.* the attack of the heathen nations upon the church of God, commence even in the days of the apostles (cf. Acts iv. 25 sqq.), and continues through the whole history of the Christian church to the last great conflict which will immediately precede the return of our Lord to judgment. And again, just as the dispersion of the flock after the slaying of the shepherd commenced at the arrest and death of Christ, and the bringing back of the hand of the Lord upon the small ones at the resurrection of Christ, so have they both been repeated in every age of the Christian church, inasmuch as with every fresh and powerful exaltation of antichristian heathenism above the church of Christ, those who are weak in faith flee and are scattered; but as soon as the Lord shows Himself alive in His church again, they let Him gather them together once more. And this will continue, according to the word of the Lord in Matt. xxiv. 10 sqq., till the end of the days, when Satan will go out to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth, and to gather together Gog and Magog to battle against the camp of the saints and the holy city; whereupon the Lord from heaven will destroy the enemy, and perfect His kingdom in the heavenly Jerusalem (Rev. xx.–xxii.).

So far as the relation between ch. xii. 2–9 and ch. xiv. 1–5 is concerned, it is evident from the text of both these passages

that they do not treat of two different attacks upon the church of God by the imperial power, occurring at different times; but that, whilst ch. xii. depicts the constantly repeated attack in the light of its successful overthrow, ch. xiv. describes the hostile attack according to its partial success and final issue in the destruction of the powers that are hostile to God. This issue takes place, no doubt, only at the end of the course of this world, with the return of Christ to the last judgment; but the fact that Jerusalem is conquered and plundered, and the half of its population led away into captivity, proves indisputably that the siege of Jerusalem predicted in ch. xiv. must not be restricted to the last attack of Antichrist upon the church of the Lord, but that all the hostile attacks of the heathen world upon the city of God are embraced in the one picture of a siege of Jerusalem. In the attack made upon Jerusalem by Gog and Magog, the city is not conquered and plundered, either according to Ezek. xxxviii. and xxxix., or according to Rev. xx. 7-9; but the enemy is destroyed by the immediate interposition of the Lord, without having got possession of the holy city. But to this ideal summary of the conflicts and victories of the nations of the world there is appended directly the picture of the final destruction of the ungodly power of the world, and the glorification of the kingdom of God; so that in ch. xiv. (from vers. 6 to 21) there is predicted in Old Testament form the completion of the kingdom of God, which the Apostle John saw and described in Rev. xx.-xxii. in New Testament mode under the figure of the heavenly Jerusalem.

MALACHI.

INTRODUCTION.

1. PERSON OF THE PROPHET.—The circumstances of *Malachi's* life are so entirely unknown, that it is a disputed point whether מַלְאָכִי in the heading (ch. i. 1) is the name of a person, or merely an ideal name given to the prophet who foretels the sending of the messenger of Jehovah (מַלְאָכִי, ch. iii. 1), and whose real name has not been handed down. The LXX. rendered the בְּיַד מַלְאָכִי of the heading by *ἐν χειρὶ ἀγγέλου αὐτοῦ*, and therefore either had or conjectured as their reading מַלְאָכוֹ; and the Targumist *Jonathan*, who adds to בְּיַד מַלְאָכִי *cujus nomen appellatur* ESRA *scriba*, has also taken מלאכי in an ideal sense, and given the statement that Ezra the scribe is the prophetic author of our book, as a conjecture founded upon the spirit and contents of the prophecy. The notion that *Malachi* is only an official name is therefore met with in many of the fathers, and has been vigorously defended in the most recent times by Hengstenberg, who follows the lead of Vitringa, whilst Ewald lays it down as an established truth. But the arguments adduced in support of this, especially by Hengstenberg in his *Christology*, are not conclusive. The circumstance "that the heading does not contain any further personal description, whether the name of his father or the place of his birth," is not more striking in our book than in the writings of Obadiah and Habakkuk, which also contain only the name of the prophet in the heading, without any further personal descriptions. It is a striking fact, no doubt, that the LXX. and the Targumist have taken the name as an appellative; at the same time, it by no means follows from this "that nothing was known in tradition of any historical person of the name of Malachi," but simply that nothing certain had

been handed down concerning the circumstances of the prophet's life. The recollection, however, of the circumstances connected with the personal history of the prophet might easily have become extinct during the period of at least 150 or 200 years which intervened between the lifetime of the prophet and the Alexandrian version of the Old Testament, if his life was not distinguished by any other facts than the prophecies contained in his book. And *Jonathan* lived, at the earliest, 400 years after Malachi. That all recollection of the person of Malachi was not lost, however, is evident both from the notice in the Talmud to the effect that Malachi was one of the men of the great synagogue, as Haggai and Zechariah had been, and also from the statements made by Ps. Doroth., Epiph., and other fathers, to the effect that he was a Levite of the tribe of Zebulun, and was born in *Supha*, or Σοφά, or Σοφιρά (see the passages in Koehler, *Mal.* pp. 10, 11), although all these statements show that nothing certain was known as to the circumstances of his life. But the principal reason for taking the name not as a *nomen proprium*, but simply as a name adopted by the prophet for this particular prophecy, is to be found, according to Hengstenberg, in the character of the name itself, viz. in the fact that it is not formed from מַלְאָךְ and יָהּ = יְהוָה, and cannot be explained by *angelicus*. But neither the one nor the other can be regarded as established. The formation of proper names by adding the termination יִ־ to appellative nouns is by no means unusual, as the long list of examples of words formed in this manner, given by Olshausen (*Heb. Gramm.* § 218, *b*), clearly shows; and the remark that "this formation only serves to denote descent or occupation" (Hengstenberg) is beside the mark, since it does not apply to such names as גַּרְמִי, זִכְרִי, and others. The interpretation of the name as a contraction of מַלְאַכְיָה, messenger of Jehovah, is quite as possible as this derivation. We have an unquestionable example of a contraction of this kind in אֲבִי in 2 Kings xviii. 2, as compared with אֲבִיָּה in 2 Chron. xxix. 1. And just as the יָהּ is there omitted altogether in אֲבִי, so is the other name of God, אֵל, omitted in פַּלְטִי in 1 Sam. xxv. 44, which is written פַּלְטִיאֵל in 2 Sam. iii. 15. This omission of the name of God is by no means rare. "The Hebrews very often drop the names of God at the end of proper names" (Simonis, p. 11).

The formation of such a name as מַלְאָכִי would be perfectly analogous to these cases; and no objection whatever can be brought against such a name, since the י need not be taken as a suffix of the first person (*my* messenger is Jehovah), but is rather to be taken as *Yod compaginis*, like יְחִזְקִיָּה formed from יְחִזְקִי (for יְחֶזֶק) and יָהּ, "messenger of Jehovah." This name might very well have been given by parents to a son whom God had given them, or sent to them in fulfilment of their wishes. Which of these two derivations deserves the preference, cannot be determined with certainty; at the same time, there is more probability in the latter than in the former, partly because of the obvious play upon His name in the words הִנְנִי שֹׁלֵחַ מַלְאָכִי (ch. iii. 1), and partly because of the Greek form of the name *Μαλαχίας* in the heading of the book. Since, then, there is no valid argument that can be brought against the formation of such a name, there is all the more reason for regarding the name in the heading (ch. i. 1) as the real name of the prophet, from the fact that the ideal explanation would be without any distinct analogy. "All the prophets whose writings have come down to us in the canon, have given their own names in the headings to their books, that is to say, the names which they received at their birth; and the names of the rest of the prophets of the Old Testament are also their real names" (Caspari, *Micha*, p. 28). Even in the case of the names *Agur* (Prov. xxx. 1) and *Lemuel* (Prov. xxxi. 1), which Hengstenberg cites as analogies, it is still doubtful whether the first, Agur the son of Jakeh, is not a historical name; and even if the ideal use of the two were established beyond all doubt, no conclusion could be drawn from a collection of proverbs bearing upon a prophetic writing. A collection of proverbs is a poetical work, whose ethical or religious truth is not dependent upon the person of the poet. The prophet, on the contrary, has to guarantee the divinity of his mission and the truth of his prophecy by his own name or his own personality.

The period of Malachi is also a disputed point, although all are agreed that he lived and prophesied after the captivity. We may gather from his prophecy, not only that he commenced his prophetic labours after Haggai and Zechariah, since, according to ch. i. 6 sqq. and iii. 10, the temple had been rebuilt and the temple-worship had been restored for a con-

siderable time, but also, as Vitringa has shown in his *Observ. ss.* ii. lib. 6, that he did not prophesy till after the first arrival of Nehemiah in Jerusalem, *i.e.* after the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes Longimanus. The chief reason for this is to be found in the agreement between Malachi and Nehemiah (ch. xiii.), in the reproof administered for the abuses current among the people, and even in the priesthood,—namely, the marriage of heathen wives (compare ch. ii. 11 sqq. with Neh. xiii. 23 sqq.), and the negligent payment of the tithes (compare ch. iii. 8–10 with Neh. xiii. 10–14). The first of these abuses—namely, that many even of the priests and Levites had taken heathen wives—found its way among the people even on Ezra's first arrival in Jerusalem; and he succeeded in abolishing it by vigorous measures, so that all Israel put away the heathen wives within three months (Ezra ix. and x.). But it is evidently impossible to refer the condemnation of the same abuse in Malachi to this particular case, because on the one hand the exhortation to be mindful of the law of Moses (ch. iii. 22), as well as the whole of the contents of our book which are founded upon the authority of the law, apply rather to the time when Ezra had already put forth his efforts to restore the authority of the law (Ezra vii. 14, 25, 26), than to the previous time; whilst, on the other hand, the offering of unsuitable animals in sacrifice (i. 7 sqq.), and unfaithfulness in the payment of the tithes and heave-offerings (iii. 8), can evidently be only explained on the supposition that Israel had to provide for the necessities of the temple and the support of the persons engaged in the worship; whereas in Ezra's time, or at any rate immediately after his arrival, as well as in the time of Darius (Ezra vi. 9, 10), the costs of worship were defrayed out of the royal revenues (Ezra vii. 15–17, 20–24). But after the abolition of the heathen marriages by Ezra, and after his reformatory labours as a whole, such breaches of the law could not have spread once more among the people in the short interval between the time of Ezra and the first arrival of Nehemiah, even if Ezra had not continued his labours up to that time, as is evident from Neh. viii.–x. Moreover, Nehemiah would no doubt have attacked these abuses at that time, as he did at a later period, if he had detected them. Consequently the falling back into the old sin that had been abolished by Ezra cannot

have taken place before the period of Nehemiah's return to the king's court, in the thirty-second year of Artaxerxes (Neh. xiii. 6). If, therefore, Malachi condemns and threatens with the punishment of God the very same abuses which Nehemiah found in Jerusalem on his second arrival there, and strove most energetically to exterminate, Malachi must have prophesied at that time; but whether immediately before Nehemiah's second arrival in Jerusalem, or during his presence there, so as to support the reformatory labours of Nehemiah by his prophetic testimony, cannot be decided with certainty. What Malachi says in ch. i. 8 concerning the attitude of the people towards the Persian governor does not necessarily presuppose a non-Israelitish vicegerent, but might also apply to Nehemiah, since the prophet's words may be understood as relating to free-will gifts or presents, whereas Nehemiah (v. 14, 15) simply says that he has not required from the people the governor's supplies, and has not burdened them with taxes. The circumstance, however, that Nehemiah finds the abuses still existing in undiminished force, renders the assumption that Malachi had already prophesied improbable, and favours rather the contemporaneous labours of the two; in which case the work of Malachi bore the same relation to that of Nehemiah as the work of Haggai and Zechariah to that of Zerubbabel and Joshua; and the reformatory labours of Nehemiah, which were chiefly of an outward character, were accompanied by the more inward labours of Malachi, as was very frequently the case in the history of Israel; for example, in the case of Isaiah and Hezekiah, or of Jeremiah and Josiah (see Hengstenberg, *Christology*, iv. p. 157).

2. The Book of Malachi contains one single prophecy, the character of which is condemnatory throughout. Starting with the love which the Lord has shown to His people (i. 2–5), the prophet proves that not only do the priests profane the name of the Lord by an unholy performance of the service at the altar (i. 6, ii. 9), but the people also repudiate their divine calling both by heathen marriages and frivolous divorces (ii. 10–16), and by their murmuring at the delay of the judgment; whereas the Lord will soon reveal Himself as a just judge, and before His coming will send His messenger, the prophet Elijah,

to warn the ungodly and lead them to repentance, and then suddenly come to His temple as the expected angel of the covenant, to refine the sons of Levi, punish the sinners who have broken the covenant, and by exterminating the wicked, as well as by blessing the godly with salvation and righteousness, make the children of Israel the people of His possession (ii. 17–iv. 6). The contents of the book, therefore, arrange themselves in three sections: ch. i. 6–ii. 9; ii. 10–16; ii. 17–iv. 6. These three sections probably contain only the leading thoughts of the oral addresses of the prophet, which are so combined as to form one single prophetic address. Throughout the whole book we meet with the spirit which developed itself among the Jews after the captivity, and assumed the concrete forms of Phariseeism and Saduceeism. The outward or grosser kind of idolatry had been rendered thoroughly distasteful to the people by the sufferings of exile; and its place was taken by the more refined idolatry of dead-work righteousness, and trust in the outward fulfilment of the letter of the divine commands, without any deeper confession of sin, or penitential humiliation under the word and will of God. Because the fulness of salvation, which the earlier prophets had set before the people when restored to favour and redeemed from captivity, had not immediately come to pass, they began to murmur against God, to cherish doubts as to the righteousness of the divine administration, and to long for the judgment to fall upon the Gentiles, without reflecting that the judgment would begin at the house of God (Amos iii. 2; 1 Pet. iv. 17). Malachi fights against this spirit, and the influence of the time in which he lived is apparent in the manner in which he attacks it. This style is distinguished from the oratorical mode of address adopted by the earlier prophets, and not unfrequently rises into a lyrico-dramatical diction, by the predominance of the conversational form of instruction, in which the thought to be discussed is laid down in the form of a generally acknowledged truth, and developed by the alternation of address and reply. In this mode of developing the thought, we can hardly fail to perceive the influence of the scholastic discourses concerning the law which were introduced by Ezra; only we must not look upon this conversational mode of instruction as a sign of the defunct spirit of prophecy, since it corresponded exactly to the practical

wants of the time, and prophecy did not die of spiritual exhaustion, but was extinguished in accordance with the will and counsel of God, as soon as its mission had been fulfilled. Malachi's language, considering the late period in which he lived and laboured, is still vigorous, pure, and beautiful. "Malachi," as Nägelsbach says in Herzog's *Cyclopædia*, "is like a late evening, which brings a long day to a close; but he is also the morning dawn, which bears a glorious day in its womb."

For the exegetical literature, see my *Lehrbuch der Einleitung*, p. 318; also Aug. Koehler's *Weissagungen Maleachi's erklärt*, Erl. 1865.

EXPOSITION.

GOD'S LOVE, AND THE CONTEMPT OF HIS NAME.—CHAP. I. 1–II. 9.

The Lord has shown love to Israel (i. 2–5), but Israel refuses Him the gratitude which is due, since the priests despise His name by offering bad sacrifices, and thereby cherish the delusion that God cannot do without the sacrifices (vers. 6–14). The people are therefore punished with adversity, and the priesthood with desecration (ii. 1–9).

Vers. 1–5. The first verse contains the heading (see the introduction), "*The burden of the word of the Lord*," as in Zech. ix. 1 and xii. 1. On *massa'* (burden), see Nah. i. 1. The prophet commences his address in ver. 2, by showing the love for which Israel has to thank its God, in order that on the ground of this fact he may bring to the light the ingratitude of the people towards their God. Ver. 2. "*I have loved you, saith Jehovah; and ye say, Wherein hast Thou loved us? Is not Esau a brother of Jacob? is the saying of Jehovah: and I loved Jacob,* Ver. 3. *And I hated Esau, and made his mountains a waste, and his inheritance for jackals of the desert.* Ver. 4. *If Edom says, We are dashed to pieces, but will build up the ruins again, thus saith Jehovah of hosts: They will build, but I will pull down: and men will call them territory of wickedness, and*

the people with whom Jehovah is angry for ever. Ver. 5. *And your eyes will see it; and ye will say, Great is Jehovah over the border of Israel.*" These four verses form neither an independent address, nor merely the first member of the following address, but the introduction and foundation of the whole book. The love which God has shown to Israel ought to form the motive and model for the conduct of Israel towards its God. אָהַב denotes love in its expression or practical manifestation. The question asked by the people, "Wherein hast Thou shown us love?" may be explained from the peculiarities of Malachi's style, and is the turn he regularly gives to his address, by way of introducing the discussion of the matter in hand, so that we are not to see in it any intention to disclose the hypocrisy of the people. The prophet proves the love of Jehovah towards Israel, from the attitude of God towards Israel and towards Edom. Jacob and Esau, the tribe-fathers of both nations, were twin brothers. It would therefore have been supposed that the posterity of both the Israelites and the Edomites would be treated alike by God. But this is not the case. Even before their birth Jacob was the chosen one; and Esau or Edom was the inferior, who was to serve his brother (Gen. xxv. 23, cf. Rom. ix. 10–13). Accordingly Jacob became the heir of the promise, and Esau lost this blessing. This attitude on the part of God towards Jacob and Esau, and towards the nations springing from them, is described by Malachi in these words: I (Jehovah) have loved Jacob, and hated Esau. The verbs אָהַב, to love, and שָׂנֵא, to hate, must not be weakened down into loving more and loving less, to avoid the danger of falling into the doctrine of predestination. שָׂנֵא, to hate, is the opposite of love. And this meaning must be retained here; only we must bear in mind, that with God anything arbitrary is inconceivable, and that no explanation is given here of the reasons which determined the actions of God. Malachi does not expressly state in what the love of God to Jacob (*i.e.* Israel) showed itself; but this is indirectly indicated in what is stated concerning the hatred towards Edom. The complete desolation of the Edomitish territory is quoted as a proof of this hatred. Ver. 3*b* does not refer to the assignment of a barren land, as Rashi, Ewald, and Umbreit suppose, but to the devastation of the land, which was only utterly waste on the western mountains; whereas it

was by no means barren on the eastern slopes and valleys (see at Gen. xxvii. 39). *Tannōth* is a feminine plural form of *tan* = *tannīm* (Mic. i. 8; Isa. xiii. 22, etc.), by which, according to the Syrio-Aramæan version, we are to understand the jackal. The meaning dwelling-places, which Gesenius and others have given to *tannōth*, after the LXX. and Peshito, rests upon a very uncertain derivation (see Roediger at Ges. *Thes.* p. 1511). "For jackals of the desert:" *i.e.* as a dwelling-place for these beasts of the desert (see Isa. xxxiv. 13). It is a disputed point when this devastation took place, and from what people it proceeded. Jahn, Hitzig, and Koehler are of opinion that it is only of the most recent date, because otherwise the Edomites would long ago have repaired the injury, which, according to ver. 4, does not appear to have been done. Ver. 4, however, simply implies that the Edomites would not succeed in the attempt to repair the injury. On the other hand, vers. 2 and 3 evidently contain the thought, that whereas Jacob had recovered, in consequence of the love of Jehovah, from the blow which had fallen upon it (through the Chaldæans), Esau's territory was still lying in ruins from the same blow, in consequence of Jehovah's hatred (Caspari, *Obad.* p. 143). It follows from this, that the devastation of Idumæa emanated from the Chaldæans. On the other hand, the objection that the Edomites appear to have submitted voluntarily to the Babylonians, and to have formed an alliance with them, does not say much, since neither the one nor the other can be raised even into a position of probability; but, on the contrary, we may infer with the greatest probability from Jer. xlix. 7 sqq., as compared with xxv. 9, 21, that the Edomites were also subjugated by Nebuchadnezzar. Maurer's assumption, that Idumæa was devastated by the Egyptians, Ammonites, and Moabites, against whom Nebuchadnezzar marched in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, is perfectly visionary. The threat in ver. 4, that if Edom attempts to rebuild its ruins, the Lord will again destroy that which is built, is equivalent to a declaration that Edom will never recover its former prosperity and power. This was soon fulfilled, the independence of the Edomites being destroyed, and their land made an eternal desert, especially from the times of the Maccabees onwards (see i. 377). The construction of אֱדוֹם as a feminine with תֹּאמַר may be explained

on the ground that the land is regarded as the mother of its inhabitants, and stands synecdochically for the population. Men will call them (לָהֶם, the Edomites) גְּבוּל רִשְׁעָה, territory, land of wickedness,—namely, inasmuch as they will look upon the permanent devastation, and the failure of every attempt on the part of the nation to rise up again, as a practical proof that the wrath of God is resting for ever upon both people and land on account of Edom's sins.—Ver. 5. These ineffectual attempts on the part of Edom to recover its standing again will Israel see with its eyes, and then acknowledge that Jehovah is showing Himself to be great above the land of Israel. מֵעַל לִגְבוּל does not mean "beyond the border of Israel" (Drus., Hitzig, Ewald, and others). מֵעַל לְ does not mean this, but simply over, above (cf. Neh. iii. 28; Eccles. v. 7). יִגְדַּל is not a wish, "Let Him be great, *i.e.* be praised," as in Ps. xxxv. 27, xl. 17, etc. The expression מֵעַל לִגְבוּל יְ does not suit this rendering; for it is an unnatural assumption to take this as an apposition to יְהוָה, in the sense of: Jehovah, who is enthroned or rules over the border of Israel. Jehovah is great, when He makes known His greatness to men, by His acts of power or grace.

Vers. 6-14. The condemnation of that contempt of the Lord which the priests displayed by offering bad or blemished animals in sacrifices, commences with the following verse. Ver. 6. "*A son honoureth the father, and a servant his master. And if I am a father, where is my honour? and if I am a master, where is my fear? saith Jehovah of hosts to you, ye priests who despise my name, and yet say, Wherein have we despised Thy name?* Ver. 7. *Ye who offer polluted bread upon my altar, and yet say, Wherewith have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of Jehovah, it is despised.* Ver. 8. *And if ye offer what is blind for sacrifice, it is no wickedness; and if ye offer what is lame and diseased, it is no wickedness. Offer it, now, to thy governor: will he be gracious to thee, or accept thy person? saith Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 9. *And now, supplicate the face of God, that He may have compassion upon us: of your hand has this occurred: will He look upon a person on your account? saith Jehovah of hosts.*" This reproof is simply directed against the priests, but it applies to the whole nation; for in the times after the captivity the priests formed the soul of the national life. In order to make an impression with his reproof, the

prophet commences with a generally acknowledged truth, by which both priests and people could and ought to measure their attitude towards the Lord. The statement, that the son honours the father and the servant his master, is not to be taken as a moral demand. יְכַבֵּד is not jussive (Targ., Luth., etc.); for this would only weaken the prophet's argument. The imperfect expresses what generally occurs, individual exceptions which are sometimes met with being overlooked. Malachi does not even appeal to the law in Ex. xx. 12, which enjoins upon children reverence towards their parents, and in which reverence on the part of a servant towards his master is also implied, but simply lays it down as a truth which no one will call in question. To this he appends the further truth, which will also be admitted without contradiction, that Jehovah is the Father and Lord of Israel. Jehovah is called the Father of Israel in the song of Moses (Deut. xxxii. 6), inasmuch as He created and trained Israel to be His covenant nation; compare Isa. lxiii. 16, where Jehovah is called the Father of Israel as being its Redeemer (also Jer. xxxi. 9 and Ps. c. 3). As Father, God is also Lord (*'ădōnīm: plur. majest.*) of the nation, which He has made His possession. But if He is a Father, the honour which a son owes to his father is due to Him; and if a Lord, the fear which a servant owes to his lord is also due to Him. The suffixes attached to כְּבוֹדִי and מוֹרָאִי are used in an objective sense, as in Gen. ix. 2, Ex. xx. 17, etc. In order now to say to the priests in the most striking manner that they do the opposite of this, the prophet calls them in his address despisers of the name of Jehovah, and fortifies this against their reply by proving that they exhibit this contempt in their performance of the altar service. With regard to the construction of the clauses in the last members of ver. 6, and also in ver. 7, the participle מְנַוְּלִים is parallel to בּוֹזֵי שְׁמִי, and the reply of the priests to the charge brought against them is attached to these two participial clauses by "and ye say;" and the antithesis is exhibited more clearly by the choice of the finite tense, than it would have been by the continuation of the participle. Ver. 7*aa* is not an answer to the question of the priests, "Wherein have we despised Thy name?" for the answer could not be given in the participle; but though the clause commencing with *maggīshīm* does explain the previous rebuke, viz. that they

despise the name of Jehovah, and will not even admit that this is true, it is not in the form of an answer to the reply of the opponents, but by a simple reference to the conduct of the priests. The answer is appended by בְּאָמְרָכֶם in ver. 7*b* to the reply made to this charge also; and this answer is explained in ver. 8 by an allusion to the nature of the sacrificial animals, without being followed by a fresh reply on the part of the priests, because this fact cannot be denied. The contempt on the part of the priests of the name of Jehovah, *i.e.* of the glory in which God manifested Himself in Israel, was seen in the fact that they offered polluted bread upon the altar of Jehovah. *Lechem*, bread or food, does not refer to the shew-bread, for that was not offered upon the altar, but is the sacrificial flesh, which is called in Lev. xxi. 6, 8, 17, the food (*lechem*) of God (on the application of this epithet to the sacrifices, see the remarks in our comm. on Lev. iii. 11, 16). The prophet calls this food מְגֹאָל, polluted, blemished, not so much with reference to the fact, that the priests offered the sacrifices in a hypocritical or impure state of mind (Ewald), as because, according to ver. 8, the sacrificial animals were affected with blemishes (*mūm*), or had something corrupt (*moshchâth*) about them (Lev. xxii. 20–25). The reply, "Wherewith have we defiled *Thee?*" is to be explained from the idea that either touching or eating anything unclean would defile a person. In this sense they regard the offering of defiled food to God as defiling God Himself. The prophet answers: In that ye represent the table of Jehovah as something contemptible. The table of Jehovah is the altar, upon which the sacrifices (*i.e.* the food of God) were laid. נִבְזֶה has the force of an adjective here: contemptible. They represent the altar as contemptible not so much in words or speeches, as in their practice, viz. by offering up bad, despicable sacrificial animals, which had blemishes, being either blind, lame, or diseased, and which were unfit for sacrifices on account of these blemishes, according to the law in Lev. xxii. 20 sqq. Thus they violated both reverence for the altar and also reverence for Jehovah. The words אַיִן רָע are not to be taken as a question, but are used by the prophet in the sense of the priests, and thus assume the form of bitter irony. רָע, bad, evil, as a calumniation of Jehovah. In order to disclose to them their wrong in the most striking manner,

the prophet asks them whether the governor (פֶּחָה: see at Hag. i. 1) would accept such presents; and then in ver. 9 draws this conclusion, that God also would not hear the prayers of the priests for the people. He clothes this conclusion in the form of a challenge to supplicate the face of Jehovah (חַלּוּ פְנֵי: see at Zech. vii. 2), that God would have compassion upon the nation; but at the same time he intimates by the question, whether God would take any notice of this, that under the existing circumstances such intercession would be fruitless. פְּנֵי אֵל is selected in the place of פְּנֵי יְהוָה, to lay the greater emphasis upon the antithesis between God and man (the governor). If the governor would not accept worthless gifts graciously, how could they expect a gracious answer to their prayers from God when they offered such gifts to Him? The suffix in יְחָנֵנוּ refers to the people, in which the prophet includes himself. The clause "from your hand has זֹאת (this: viz. the offering of such reprehensible sacrifices) proceeded" (cf. Isa. l. 11), is inserted between the summons to pray to God and the intimation of the certain failure of such intercession, to give still further prominence to the unlawfulness of such an act. The question חַלּוֹ־נָא is appended to the principal clause הֲיִשָּׂא וגו׳, and מִכֶּם פָּנִים does not stand for פְּנֵיכֶם: will He lift up your face, *i.e.* show you favour? but מִכֶּם is causal, "on your account" (Koehler): "will He regard a person, that is to say, will He show favour to any one, on your account, viz. because ye pray to Him for compassion, when these are the actions ye perform?" The view of Jerome, Grotius, and Hitzig, that the challenge to seek the face of God is an earnest call to repentance or to penitential prayer, is at variance with the context. What follows, for example, is opposed to this, where the prophet says it would be better if the temple were closed, since God does not need sacrifices.

Ver. 10. "*O that there were one among you, who would shut the doors, that ye might not light mine altar to no purpose! I have no pleasure in you, saith Jehovah of hosts, and sacrificial offering does not please me from your hand.* Ver. 11. *For from the rising of the sun to the setting thereof my name is great among the nations, and in every place incense is burned and sacrifice offered, and indeed a pure sacrifice to my name; for my name is great among the nations, saith Jehovah of hosts.*

Ver. 12. *And ye desecrate it with your saying: the table of Jehovah, it is defiled, and its fruit—contemptible is its food.* Ver. 13. *And ye say: behold what a plague! and ye blow upon it, saith Jehovah of hosts, and ye bring hither what is robbed and the lame and the sick, and thus ye bring the sacrificial gift; shall I take pleasure in this from your hand? saith Jehovah.*" The construction מִי בָכֶם וְיִסְגֹּר is to be explained in accordance with Job xix. 23: "Who is among you and he would shut," for "who is there who would shut?" and the question is to be taken as the expression of a wish, as in 2 Sam. xv. 4, Ps. iv. 7, etc.: "would that some one among you would shut!" The thought is sharpened by *gam*, which not only belongs to בָכֶם, but to the whole of the clause: "O that some one would shut," etc. The doors, the shutting of which is to be desired, are the folding doors of the inner court, in which the altar of burnt-offering stood; and the object of the wish is that the altar might no more be lighted up, not "by lights which burned by the side of the altar" (Ewald), but by the shining of the sacrificial fire which burned upon the altar. חִנָּם, in vain, *i.e.* without any object or use, for Jehovah had no pleasure in such priests or such worthless sacrifices. *Minchâh* here is not the meat-offering as distinguished from the slain-offering, but sacrifice generally, as in 1 Sam. ii. 17, Isa. i. 13, Zeph. iii. 10, etc. Such sacrifices God does not desire, for His name proves itself to be great among all the nations of the earth, so that pure sacrifices are offered to Him in every place. This is the simple connection between vers. 10 and 11, and one in perfect harmony with the words. Koehler's objection, that such a line of argument apparently presupposes that God needs sacrifices on the part of man for His own sake, and is only in a condition to despise the sacrifices of His nation when another nation offers Him better ones, has no force, because the expression "for His own sake," in the sense of "for His sustenance or to render the perpetuation of His being possible," with the conclusion drawn from it, is neither to be found in the words of the text, nor in the explanation referred to. God does indeed need no sacrifices for the maintenance of His existence, and He does not demand them for this purpose, but He demands them as signs of the dependence of men upon Him, or of the recognition on the part of men that they are indebted to God for life and every other blessing;

and owe Him honour, praise, and thanksgiving in return. In this sense God needs sacrifices, because otherwise He would not be God to men on earth; and from this point of view the argument that God did not want to receive the reprehensible sacrifices of the Israelitish priests, because sacrifices were offered to Him by the nations of the earth in all places, and therefore His name was and remained great notwithstanding the desecration of it on the part of Israel, was a very proper one for attacking the delusion, that God needs sacrifices for His own sustenance; a delusion which the Israelitish priests, against whom Malachi was contending, really cherished, if not *in thesi*, at all events *in praxi*, when they thought any sacrificial animal good enough for God. Koehler's assumption, that ver. 11 contains a subordinate parenthetical thought, and that the reason for the assertion in ver. 10*b* is not given till vers. 12, 13, is opposed to the structure of the sentences, since it necessitates the insertion of "although" after כִּי in ver. 11.

It is much more difficult to decide the question whether ver. 11 treats of what was already occurring at the time of the prophet himself, as Hitzig, Maurer, and Koehler suppose (after the LXX, Ephr., Theod. Mops., etc.), or of that which would take place in the future through the reception of the heathen into the kingdom of God in the place of Israel, which would be rejected for a time (Cyr., Theod., Jerome, Luther, Calvin, and others, down to Hengstenberg and Schmieder). Both of these explanations are admissible on grammatical grounds; for such passages as Gen. xv. 14 and Joel iii. 4 show very clearly that the participle is also used for the future. If we take the words as referring to the present, they can only mean that the heathen, with the worship and sacrifices which they offer to the gods, do worship, though ignorantly yet in the deepest sense, the true and living God (Koehler). But this thought is not even expressed by the Apostle Paul in so definite or general a form, either in Rom. i. 19, 20, where he teaches that the heathen can discern the invisible being of God from His works, or in Acts xvii. 23 sqq. in his address at Athens, where he infers from the inscription upon an altar, "to the unknown God," that the unknown God, whom the Athenians worshipped, is the true God who made heaven and earth. Still less is this thought contained in our verse. Malachi does not speak of an

"unknown God," whom all nations from the rising to the setting of the sun, *i.e.* over all the earth, worshipped, but says that Jehovah's name is great among the nations of the whole earth. And the name of God is only great among the Gentiles, when Jehovah has proved Himself to them to be a great God, so that they have discerned the greatness of the living God from His marvellous works and thus have learned to fear Him (cf. Zeph, ii. 11; Ps. xlvi. 9-11; Ex. xv. 11, 14–16). This experience of the greatness of God forms the substratum for the offering of sacrifices in every place, since this offering is not mentioned merely as the consequence of the fact that the name of Jehovah is great among the nations; but in the clause before the last, "the latter is also expressly placed towards the former in the relation of cause to effect" (Koehler). The idea, therefore, that the statement, that incense is burned and sacrifice offered to the name of Jehovah in every place, refers to the sacrifices which the heathen offered to their gods, is quite inadmissible. At the time of Malachi the name of Jehovah was not great from the rising to the setting of the sun, nor were incense and sacrifice offered to Him in every place, and therefore even Hitzig looks upon the expression בְּכָל־מָקוֹם as "saying too much." Consequently we must understand the words prophetically as relating to that spread of the kingdom of God among all nations, with which the worship of the true God would commence "in every place." בְּכָל־מָקוֹם forms an antithesis to the *one* place, in the temple at Jerusalem, to which the worship of God was limited during the time of the old covenant (Deut. xii. 5, 6). מְקֻטָּר is not a *partic. nominasc.*, incense, *suffimentum*, for this could not signify the burnt-offering or slain-offering as distinguished from the meat-offering (*minchâh*), but it is a *partic. verbale*, and denotes not the kindling of the sacrificial flesh upon the altar, but the kindling of the incense (*suffitur*); for otherwise מֻגָּשׁ would necessarily stand before מְקֻטָּר, since the presentation preceded the burning upon the altar. The two participles are connected together *asyndetos* and without any definite subject (see Ewald, § 295, *a*). It is true that *minchâh t'hōrâh* does actually belong to *muggâsh* as the subject, but it is attached by *Vav explic.* in the form of an explanatory apposition: offering is presented to my name, and indeed a sacrificial gift (*minchâh* covering every sacrifice, as

in ver. 10). The emphasis rests upon *t'hōrâh*, pure, *i.e.* according to the requirements of the law, in contrast to sacrifices polluted by faulty animals, such as the priests of that day were accustomed to offer.[1] In the allusion to the worship, which would be paid by all nations to the name of the Lord, there is an intimation that the kingdom of God will be taken from the Jews who despise the Lord, and given to the heathen who seek God. This intimation forms the basis for the curse pronounced in ver. 14 upon the despisers of God, and shows "that the kingdom of God will not perish, when the Lord comes and smites the land with the curse (iv. 6), but that this apparent death is the way to true life" (Hengstenberg).

To this allusion to the attitude which the heathen will assume towards Jehovah when He reveals His name to them, the prophet appends as an antithesis in vers. 12, 13 a repetition of the reproof, that the priests of Israel desecrate the name of the Lord by that contempt of His name, which they display by offering faulty animals in sacrifice. Ver. 12 is only a repetition of the rebuke in ver. 7. חִלֵּל is really equivalent to בָּזָה שֵׁם and גָּאַל in vers. 6 and 7, and מְגֹאָל to נִבְזֶה in ver. 7, which occurs in the last clause of ver. 12 as synonymous with it. The additional words וְנִיבוֹ וגו׳ serve to strengthen the opinion expressed by the priests concerning the table of the Lord. נִיבוֹ is placed at the head absolutely, and is substantially resumed in אָכְלוֹ. נִיב, *proventus*, produce, income; the suffix refers to *shulchan Y'hōvâh* (the table of the Lord). The revenue of the table of the Lord, *i.e.* of the altar, consisted of the sacrifices offered upon it, which are also called its food. The assumption is an erroneous one, that the sentence contains any such thought as

[1] In Mal. i. 11 the Romish Church finds a biblical foundation for its doctrine of the bloodless sacrifice of the New Testament, *i.e.* the holy sacrifice of the mass (see *Canones et decreta concil. Trident.* sess. 22), understanding by *minchâh* the meat-offering as distinguished from the bloody sacrifices. But even if there were any ground for this explanation of the word, which there is not, it would furnish no support to the sacrifice of the mass, since apart from the fact that the sacrifice of the mass has a totally different meaning from the meat-offering of the Old Testament, the literal interpretation of the word is precluded by the parallel "burning incense" or "frankincense." If burning incense was a symbol of prayer, as even Reincke admits, the "sacrificial offering" can only have denoted the spiritual surrender of a man to God (Rom. xii. 1).

the following: "The revenue drawn by the priests from the altar, *i.e.* the sacrificial flesh which fell to their share, was contemptible;" according to which the priests would be represented as declaring, that they themselves could not eat the flesh of the sacrifices offered without disgust; for they could not possibly speak in this way, since it was they themselves who admitted the faulty animals. If the flesh of blind, lame, or diseased animals had been too bad for food in their estimation, they would not have admitted such animals or offered them in sacrifice (Koehler). Even in ver. 13 this thought is not implied. מַתְּלָאָה is a contraction of מַה־תְּלָאָה (cf. Ges. § 20, 2, *a*): What a weariness it is! The object, which the priests declare to be a burdensome and troublesome affair, can only be inferred from the following expression, *v'hippachtem 'ōthō*. *Hippēăch* signifies here to blow away, like הֵפִיחַ בְּ in Ps. x. 5, which is radically connected with it, *i.e.* to treat contemptuously. The suffix אֹותוֹ does not refer to אָבַל, but to שֻׁלְחַן יי. The table of Jehovah (*i.e.* the altar) they treat contemptuously. Consequently the service at the altar is a burden or a trouble to them, whereas this service ought to be regarded as an honour and a privilege. Jerome thinks that instead of אֹותוֹ, we might read אֹותִי, which is found in a good number of codices; and according to the Masora, אֹותוֹ has found its way into the text as *Tikkun Sopherim* (compare the remarks at Hab. i. 12 on the *Tikkune Sopherim*). But in this case also the reading in the text is evidently original and correct. They manifest their contempt of the altar by offering in sacrifice that which has been stolen, etc. (cf. ver. 8). The first וַהֲבֵאתֶם is to be understood as referring to the bringing of the animals to the altar; the second to the offering of the animals upon the altar; and וַהֲבֵאתֶם אֶת־הַמִּנְחָה is to be interpreted thus: "And having brought such worthless animals to the slaughter, ye then offer the sacrificial gift." There is indeed no express prohibition in the law against offering *gâzūl*, or that which has been stolen; but it was shut out from the class of admissible sacrifices by the simple fact, that robbery was to be visited with punishment as a crime. The reproof closes with the question, which is repeated from ver. 8 (cf. ver. 10), whether God can accept such sacrifices with pleasure. The prophet then utters the curse in the name of God upon all who offer bad and unsuitable sacrifices.

Ver. 14. "*And cursed is he who deceives whilst there is in his flock a male animal, and he who vows and sacrifices to the Lord that which is corrupt; for I am a great King, saith Jehovah of hosts, and my name is feared among the nations.*" This verse is not attached adversatively to ver. 13*b*, but Vav is the simple copula, for the question in ver. 13*b* has a negative sense, or is to be answered by "No." To this answer there is attached the curse upon all the Israelites who offer such sacrifices to God as have not the characteristics required by the law. Two cases are mentioned. In the first place, that when according to the law a male animal ought to have been sacrificed, the person offering the sacrifice offered a female, *i.e.* one of less value, under the pretence that he did not possess or could not procure a male. The prophet calls this *nâkhal*, cheating. The second case refers to votive sacrifices; for which as *zebhach shelâmīm* (Lev. xxii. 21) both male and female animals could be used, though only such as were free from faults, inasmuch as animals having any *moshchâth* are declared in Lev. xxii. 25 to be not acceptable. *Moshchâth*, according to the Masoretic pointing, is the feminine of the *hophal* participle for מָשְׁחָתָה, like מִשְׁרַת for מְשֻׁרֶתֶת in 1 Kings i. 15 (cf. Ewald, § 188, *b*, and Olshausen, p. 393), according to which we should have to think of a female animal in bad condition. This pointing, however, is probably connected with the view still defended by Ewald, Maurer, and Hitzig, that the words וְנֹדֵר וְזֹבֵחַ are a continuation of the circumstantial clause וְיֵשׁ וגו׳, and that ver. 14 only refers to votive sacrifices: Cursed is the deceiver who has in his flock a male, but vows and sacrifices a corrupt female. This view, however, is evidently opposed to the meaning of the words. If וְנֹדֵר were a circumstantial clause, we should expect וְהוּא נֹדֵר. Moreover, since even female animals were admissible for votive sacrifices, the vowing and offering of a female animal could not be blamed in itself, and therefore what was reprehensible was not that a female animal was vowed and offered in sacrifice by any one, but that, instead of offering a faultless animal (*tâmīm*), he presented a blemished one. We must therefore follow the ancient translators and many commentators, who read *moshchâth* (*masc.*), according to which the curse is pronounced upon any one who vowed a sacrifice and afterwards redeemed his vow with a faulty and unsuitable animal.

An animal was *moshchâth*, corrupt, when it had any fault, which rendered it unsuitable for sacrifice. The reason for the curse is explained by reminding them of the greatness of God. Because Jehovah is a great King and His name is feared among the nations, to offer a corrupt animal in sacrifice is an offence against His majesty.

Chap. ii. 1–9. The rebuke administered to the priests for their wicked doings is followed by an announcement of the punishment which they will bring upon themselves in case they should not observe the admonition, or render to the Lord the reverence due to His name when discharging the duties of their office. Ver. 1. "*And now, ye priests, this commandment comes to you.* Ver. 2. *If ye do not hear and lay it to heart, to give glory to my name, saith Jehovah of hosts, I send against you the curse and curse your blessings, yea I have cursed them, because ye will not lay it to heart.* Ver. 3. *Behold I rebuke your arm, and scatter dung upon your face, the dung of your feasts, and they will carry you away to it.* Ver. 4. *And ye will perceive that I have sent this commandment to you, that it may be my covenant with Levi, saith Jehovah of hosts.*" Ver. 1 introduces the threat; this is called *mitsvâh*, a command; not as a commission which the prophet received, for the speaker is not the prophet, but Jehovah Himself; nor as "instruction, admonition, or warning," for *mitsvâh* has no such meaning. *Mitsvâh* is rather to be explained from *tsivvâh* in Nah. i. 14. The term command is applied to that which the Lord has resolved to bring upon a person, inasmuch as the execution or accomplishment is effected by earthly instruments by virtue of a divine command. The reference is to the threat of punishment which follows in vers. 2 and 3, but which is only to be carried out in case the priests do not hear and lay to heart, namely, the warning which the Lord has addressed to them through Malachi (i. 6–13), and sanctify His name by their service. If they shall not do this, God will send the curse against them, and that in two ways. In the first place He will curse their blessings; in fact, He has already done so. *B'râkhōth*, blessings, are obviously not the revenues of the priests, tithes, atonement-money, and portions of the sacrifices (L. de Dieu, Ros., Hitzig), but the blessings pronounced by the priests upon the people by virtue of their office. These

God will curse, *i.e.* He will make them ineffective, or turn them into the very opposite. וְגַם אֲרוֹתִיהָ is not a simple, emphatic repetition, but אֲרוֹתִי is a perfect, which affirms that the curse has already taken effect. The emphatic *v'gam*, and also, and indeed, also requires this. The suffix הָ attached to אֲרוֹתִי is to be taken distributively: "each particular blessing." In the second place God will rebuke אֶת־הַזֶּרַע, *i.e.* the seed. But since the priests did not practise agriculture, it is impossible to see how rebuking the seed, *i.e.* causing a failure of the crops, could be a punishment peculiar to the priests. We must therefore follow the LXX., Aquila, Vulg., Ewald, and others, and adopt the pointing הַזְּרֹעַ, *i.e.* the arm. Rebuking the arm does not mean exactly "laming the arm," nor manifesting His displeasure in any way against the arm, which the priests raised to bless (Koehler). For it was not the arm but the hand that was raised to bless (Lev. ix. 22; Luke xxiv. 50), and rebuking signifies something more than the manifestation of displeasure. It is with the arm that a man performs his business or the duties of his calling; and rebuking the arm, therefore, signifies the neutralizing of the official duties performed at the altar and in the sanctuary. Moreover, God will also deliver them up to the most contemptuous treatment, by scattering dung in their faces, namely, the dung of their feasts. *Chaggīm*, feasts, is used metonymically for festal sacrifices, or the sacrificial animals slain at the festivals (cf. Ps. cxviii. 27). The dung of the sacrificial animals was to be carried away to an unclean place outside the camp and burned there, in the case of the sin-offerings, upon an ash-heap (Lev. iv. 12, xvi. 27; Ex. xxix. 14). Scattering dung in the face was a sign and figurative description of the most ignominious treatment. Through the expression "dung of your festal sacrifices," the festal sacrifices offered by these priests are described as being themselves dung; and the thought is this: the contempt of the Lord, which they show by offering blind or lame animals, or such as are blemished in other ways, He will repay to them by giving them up to the greatest ignominy. The threat is strengthened by the clause וְנָשָׂא אֶתְכֶם אֵלָיו, which has been interpreted, however, in different ways. The Vulgate, Luther ("and shall remain sticking to you"), Calvin, and others take *peresh* as the subject to נָשָׂא: "the dung will draw the priests

to itself, so that they will also become dung." But נָשָׂא has no such meaning; we must therefore leave the subject indefinite: they (*man*) will carry you away, or sweep you away to it, *i.e.* treat you as dung. When they should be treated in this ignominious manner, then would they perceive that the threatening had come from the Lord. "This commandment (*mitsvâh*) is the *mitsvâh* mentioned in ver. 1. The infinitive clause which follows announces the purpose of God, in causing this threat to come to pass. But the explanation of these words is a disputed point, since we may either take *b'rīthī* (my covenant) as the subject, or supply *hammitsvâh* (the commandment) from the previous clause. In the first case ("that my covenant may be with Levi") the meaning could only be, that the covenant with Levi may continue. But although *hâyâh* does indeed mean to exist, it does not mean to continue, or be maintained. We must therefore take *hammitsvâh* as the subject, as Luther, Calvin, and others have done ("that it, viz. my purpose, may be my covenant with Levi"). Koehler adopts this, and has explained it correctly thus: "They will perceive that just as Jehovah has hitherto regulated His conduct towards Levi by the terms of His covenant, which was made with it at the time of its departure from Egypt, so will He henceforth let it be regulated by the terms of the decree of punishment which He has resolved upon now, so that this decree of punishment takes the place, as it were, of the earlier covenant." *Lēvī* is the tribe of Levi, which culminated in the priesthood. The attitude of God towards the priests is called a covenant, inasmuch as God placed them in a special relation to Himself by choosing them for the service of the sanctuary, which not only secured to them rights and promises, but imposed duties upon them, on the fulfilment of which the reception of the gifts of divine grace depended (*vid.* Deut. x. 8, 9, xxxiii. 8–10; Num. xviii. 1 sqq., xxv. 10 sqq.).

To explain and show the reason for this thought, the real nature of the covenant made with Levi is described in vers. 5–7; and vers. 8 and 9 then show how the priests have neutralized this covenant by forsaking the way of their fathers, so that God is obliged to act differently towards them now, and deliver them up to shame and ignominy. Ver. 5. "*My covenant was with him life and salvation, and I lent them to him for*

fear, and he feared me and trembled before my name. Ver. 6. *Law of truth was in his mouth and there was no perversity on his lips, he walked with me in salvation and integrity, and brought back many from guilt.* Ver. 7. *For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and men seek law from his mouth, because he is a messenger of Jehovah.*" In ver. 5*a* הַחַיִּים וְהַשָּׁלוֹם are the nominative of the predicate. "My covenant was with him life," etc., means, my covenant consisted in this, that life and salvation were guaranteed and granted to him. The elliptical mode of explaining it, viz. "my covenant was a covenant of life and salvation," gives the same sense, only there is no analogous example by which this ellipsis can be vindicated, since such passages as Num. xxv. 12, Gen. xxiv. 24, and Hos. xiv. 3, which Hitzig adduces in support of it, are either of a different character, or different in their meaning. *Shâlōm*, salvation (peace), is the sum of all the blessings requisite for wellbeing. Jehovah granted life and salvation to Levi, *i.e.* to the priesthood, for fear, viz. as the lever of the fear of God; and Levi, *i.e.* the priesthood of the olden time, responded to this divine intention. "He feared me." *Nichath* is the *niphal* not of *nâchath*, he descended, *i.e.* humbled himself (Ewald, Reincke), but of *châthath*, to terrify, to shake, which is frequently met with in connection with יָרֵא (*e.g.* Deut. xxxi. 8, Josh. i. 9, Jer. i. 17). Vers. 5 and 6 state how Levi preserved this fear both officially and in life. *Tōrath 'ĕmeth* (analogous to *mishpat 'ĕmeth* in Zech. vii. 9) is instruction in the law consisting in truth. Truth, which had its roots in the law of Jehovah, was the rule not only of his own conduct, but also and more especially of the instruction which he had to give to the people (cf. ver. 7). The opposite of *'ĕmeth* is *'avlâh*, perversity, conduct which is not regulated by the law of God, but by selfishness or sinful self-interest. Grammatically considered, the feminine *'avlâh* is not the subject to נִמְצָא, but is construed as the object: "they found not perversity" (cf. Ges. § 143, 1, *b*; Ewald, § 295, *b*). Thus he walked in peace (salvation) and integrity before God. *B'shâlōm* is not merely in a state of peace, or in peaceableness, nor even equivalent to בְּלֵבָב שָׁלֵם (2 Kings xx. 3), but according to ver. 5, "equipped with the salvation bestowed upon him by God." The *integritas vitæ* is affirmed in בְּמִישׁוֹר. הָלַךְ אֶת־יי, to walk with Jehovah, denotes

the most confidential intercourse with God, or walking as it were by the side of God (see at Gen. v. 22). Through this faithful discharge of the duties of his calling, Levi (*i.e.* the priesthood) brought many back from guilt or iniquity, that is to say, led many back from the way of sin to the right way, viz. to the fear of God (cf. Dan. xii. 3). But Levi did nothing more than what the standing and vocation of the priest required. For the lips of the priest should preserve knowledge. דַּעַת is the knowledge of God and of His will as revealed in the law. These the lips of the priest should keep, to instruct the people therein; for out of the mouth of the priest men seek *tōráh*, law, *i.e.* instruction in the will of God, because he is a messenger of Jehovah to the people. מַלְאָךְ, the standing epithet for the angels as the heavenly messengers of God, is here applied to the priests, as it is in Hag. i. 13 to the prophets. Whilst the prophets were extraordinary messengers of God, who proclaimed to the people the will and counsel of the Lord, the priests, by virtue of their office, were so to speak the standing or ordinary messengers of God. But the priests of that time had become utterly untrue to this vocation.

Ver. 8. "*But ye have departed from the way, have made many to stumble at the law, have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 9. *Thus I also make you despised and base with all the people, inasmuch as ye do not keep my ways, and respect person in the law.*" הַדֶּרֶךְ is the way depicted in vers. 6 and 7, in which the priests ought to have walked. הִכְשַׁלְתֶּם בַּתּוֹרָה does not mean "ye have caused to fall by instruction" (Koehler); for, in the first place, *hattōráh* (with the article) is not the instruction or teaching of the priests, but the law of God; and secondly, ב with כָּשַׁל denotes the object against which a man stumbles and which causes him to fall. Hitzig has given the correct explanation: ye have made the law to many a מִכְשׁוֹל, instead of the light of their way, through your example and through false teaching, as though the law allowed or commanded things which in reality are sin. In this way they have corrupted or overthrown the covenant with Levi. הַלֵּוִי, with the article, is not the patriarch Levi, but his posterity, really the priesthood, as the kernel of the Levites. Hence Jehovah also is no longer bound by the covenant, but withdraws from the priests what He granted to the Levi who

was faithful to the covenant, viz. life and salvation (ver. 5), and makes them contemptible and base with all the people. This is simply a just retribution for the fact, that the priests depart from His ways and have respect to men. *Battōrâh*, in the law, *i.e.* in the administration of the law, they act with partiality. For the fact itself compare Mic. iii. 11.

CONDEMNATION OF MARRIAGES WITH HEATHEN WOMEN AND OF DIVORCES.—CHAP. II. 10–16.

This section does not stand in any close connection with the preceding one. It does not furnish an example of the stumbling upon the law mentioned in ver. 8; nor is the violation of the covenant of the fathers (ver. 10) or of the marriage covenant (ver. 14) appended to the neutralizing of the covenant of Levi on the part of the priests (vers. 8 and 4). For there is no indication in vers. 10–16 that the priests gave any impulse through their bad teaching to the breaches of the law which are here condemned; and the violation of the covenant of the fathers and of the marriage covenant forms no more a thought, by which the whole is ruled, than the violation of the covenant with Levi in the previous section (Koehler). The prophet rather passes over with ver. 10 to a perfectly new object, namely, the condemnation of marriages with heathen women (vers. 10–12), and of the frivolous dissolution of marriages with Israelitish women, which was the natural consequence of the former (vers. 13–16). This sin the priests have only so far participated in, that they set a bad example to the people in their own unprincipled treatment of the law, which might easily lead to contempt of the divine ordinance of marriage.—Ver. 10. "*Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? wherefore are we treacherous one towards another, to desecrate the covenant of our fathers?* Ver. 11. *Judah acts treacherously, and abomination has taken place in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has desecrated the sanctuary of Jehovah, which He loves, and marries the daughter of a strange god.* Ver. 12. *Jehovah will cut off, to the man that doeth this, wakers and answerers out of the tents of Jacob, and him that offereth sacrifices to Jehovah of*

hosts." Malachi adopts the same course here as in the previous rebuke, and commences with a general clause, from which the wrongfulness of marriages with heathen women and of frivolous divorces necessarily followed. The *one* father, whom all have, is neither Adam, the progenitor of all men, nor Abraham, the father of the Israelitish nation, but Jehovah, who calls Himself the Father of the nation in ch. i. 6. God is the Father of Israel as its Creator; not, however, in the general sense in which He is Creator of all men, but in the more sacred sense, according to which He made Israel the people of His possession. By the two clauses placed at the head, Malachi intends not so much to lay emphasis upon the common descent of all the Israelites, by virtue of which they form one united family in contrast with the heathen, as to say that all the Israelites are children of God, and as such spiritual brethren and sisters. Consequently every violation of the fraternal relation, such as that of which the Israelite was guilty who married a heathen woman, or put away an Israelitish wife, was also an offence against God, a desecration of His covenant. The idea that the expression "one father" refers to Abraham as the ancestor of the nation (Jerome, Calvin, and others), is precluded by the fact, that not only the Israelites, but also the Ishmaelites and Edomites were descended from Abraham; and there is no ground whatever for thinking of Jacob, because, although he had indeed given his name to *Israel*, he is never singled out as its ancestor. *Nibhgad* is the first pers. plur. imperf. *kal*, notwithstanding the fact that in other cases *bâgad* has *cholem* in the imperfect; for the *niphal* of this verb is never met with. The Israelite acted faithlessly towards his brother, both when he contracted a marriage with a heathen woman, and when he put away his Israelitish wife, and thereby desecrated the covenant of the fathers, *i.e.* the covenant which Jehovah made with the fathers, when He chose them from among the heathen, and adopted them as His covenant nation (Ex. xix. 5, 6, xxiv. 8). The reason for this rebuke is given in ver. 11, in a statement of what has taken place. In order the more emphatically to describe this as reprehensible, *bâg'dâh* (hath dealt treacherously) is repeated and applied to the whole nation. *Y'hūdâh* (Judah), construed as a feminine, is the land acting in its inhabitants. Then what

has taken place is described as תּוֹעֵבָה, abomination, like idolatry, witchcraft, and other grievous sins (cf. Deut. xiii. 15, xviii. 9 sqq.), in which the name *Israel* is intentionally chosen as the holy name of the nation, to indicate the contrast between the holy vocation of Israel and its unholy conduct. In addition to Israel as the national name (= Judah) Jerusalem is also mentioned, as is frequently the case, as the capital and centre of the nation. What has occurred is an abomination, because Judah desecrates קֹדֶשׁ יי, *i.e.* neither the holiness of Jehovah as a divine attribute, nor the temple as the sanctuary, still less the holy state of marriage, which is never so designated in the Old Testament, but Israel as the nation which Jehovah loved. Israel is called *qōdesh*, a sanctuary or holy thing, as עַם קָדוֹשׁ, which Jehovah has chosen out of all nations to be His peculiar possession (Deut. vii. 6, xiv. 2; Jer. ii. 3; Ps. cxiv. 2; Ezra ix. 2: see Targ., Rashi, Ab. Ezra, etc.). Through the sin which it had committed, Judah, *i.e.* the community which had returned from exile, had profaned itself as the sanctuary of God, or neutralized itself as a holy community chosen and beloved of Jehovah (Koehler). To this there is appended, though not till the last clause, the statement of the abomination: Judah, in its individual members, has married the daughter of a strange god (cf. Ezra ix. 2 sqq.; Neh. xiii. 23 sqq.). By the expression בַּת אֵל נֵכָר the person married is described as an idolatress (*bath*, daughter = dependent). This involved the desecration of the holy calling of the nation. It is true that in the law it is only marriages with Canaanites that are expressly forbidden (Ex. xxxiv. 16; Deut. vii. 3), but the reason assigned for this prohibition shows, that all marriages with heathen women, who did not give up their idolatry, were thereby denounced as irreconcilable with the calling of Israel (see at 1 Kings xi. 1, 2). This sin may God punish by cutting off every one who commits it. This threat of punishment (ver. 12) is indeed only expressed in the form of a wish, but the wish has been created by the impulse of the Holy Spirit. Very different and by no means satisfactory explanations have been given of the expression עֵר וְעֹנֶה, the waking one (עֵר the participle of עוּר) and the answering one, a proverbial description of the posterity of the wicked man formed by the combination of opposites (on the custom of expressing totality

by opposites, see Dietrich, *Abhandlung zur hebr. Gramm.* p. 201 sqq.), in which, however, the meaning of the word עֵר still continues a matter of dispute. The rabbinical explanation, which is followed by Luther, viz. teacher and scholar, is founded upon the meaning *excitare* given to the verb עוּר, and the *excitans* is supposed to be the teacher who stimulates by questioning and admonishing. But apart from all other reasons which tell against this explanation, it does not suit the context; for there is not a single word to indicate that the prophet is speaking only of priests who have taken foreign wives; on the contrary, the prophet accuses Judah and Jerusalem, and therefore the people generally, of being guilty of this sin. Moreover, it was no punishment to an Israelite to have no rabbi or teacher of the law among his sons. The words are at any rate to be taken more generally than this. The best established meaning is *vigil et respondens*, in which עֵר is taken transitively, as in Job xli. 2 in the *chethib*, and in the Chaldee עֵר, watcher (Dan. iv. 10 (13) and 14 (17)), in the sense of *vivus quisque*. In this case the proverbial phrase would be taken from the night-watchman (J. D. Mich., Ros., Ges. *Thes.* p. 1004). It is no conclusive objection to this, that the words which follow, וּמַעֲנֶה מִנְחָה, evidently stand upon the same line as עֵר וְעֹנֶה and must form part of the same whole, and therefore that עֵר וְעֹנֶה cannot of itself embrace the whole. For this conclusion is by no means a necessary one. If the two expressions referred to portions of the same whole, they could not well be separated from one another by מֵאָהֳלֵי יַעֲקֹב. Moreover, the limitation of עֵר וְעֹנֶה to the age of childhood founders upon the artificial interpretation which it is necessary to give to the two words. According to Koehler עֵר denotes the child in the first stage of its growth, in which it only manifests its life by occasionally waking up from its ordinary state of deep, death-like slumber, and עֹנֶה the more advanced child, which is able to speak and answer questions. But who would ever think of calling a child in the first weeks of its life, when it sleeps more than it wakes, a waker? Moreover, the sleep of an infant is not a "deep, death-like slumber." The words "out of the tents of Jacob," *i.e.* the houses of Israel, belong to יַכְרֵת. The last clause adds the further announcement, that whoever commits such abominations shall have no one to offer a sacrificial gift to the Lord.

These words are not to be taken as referring to the priestly caste, as Hitzig supposes; but Jerome has given the correct meaning: "and whoever is willing to offer a gift upon the altar for men of this description." The meaning of the whole verse is the following: "May God not only cut off every descendant of such a sinner out of the houses of Israel, but any one who might offer a sacrifice for him in expiation of his sin."

Ver. 13. "*And this ye do a second time: cover the altar of Jehovah with tears, with weeping and sighs, so that He does not turn any more to the sacrifice, and accept the well-pleasing thing at your hand.* Ver. 14. *And ye say, Wherefore? Because Jehovah has been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, towards whom thou hast acted treacherously; whereas she is nevertheless thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant.* Ver. 15. *And not one did so who had still a remnant of spirit. And what (did) the one? He sought seed of God. Therefore shall ye take heed for your spirit, and deal not faithlessly to the wife of thy youth.* Ver. 16. *For I hate divorce, saith Jehovah, the God of Israel; and he will cover wickedness over his garment, saith Jehovah of hosts. Thus shall ye take heed to your spirit, and not deal treacherously.*" In these verses the prophet condemns a second moral transgression on the part of the people, viz. the putting away of their wives. By *shēnīth* (as á second thing, *i.e.* for the second time) this sin is placed in the same category as the sin condemned in the previous verses. Here again the moral reprehensibility of the sin is described in ver. 11, before the sin itself is named. They cover the altar of Jehovah with tears, namely, by compelling the wives who have been put away to lay their trouble before God in the sanctuary. The inf. constr. introduces the more minute definition of זֹאת; and בְּכִי וַאֲנָקָה is a supplementary apposition to דִּמְעָה, added to give greater force to the meaning. מֵאֵין עוֹד, so that there is no more a turning (of Jehovah) to the sacrifice, *i.e.* so that God does not graciously accept your sacrifice any more (cf Num. xvi. 15). The following infinitive וְלָקַחַת is also dependent upon מֵאֵין, but on account of the words which intervene it is attached with לְ. רָצוֹן, the good pleasure or satisfaction, used as *abstractum pro concreto* for the well-pleasing sacrifice. Ver. 14. This sin also the persons addressed will not recognise. They inquire the reason why God will no more graciously accept

their sacrifices, whereupon the prophet discloses their sin in the plainest terms. עַל־כִּי = עַל־אֲשֶׁר, as in Deut. xxxi. 17, Judg. iii. 12, etc. The words, "because Jehovah was a witness between thee and the wife of thy youth," cannot be understood as Ges., Umbreit, and Koehler assume, in accordance with ch. iii. 5, as signifying that Jehovah had interposed between them as an avenging witness; for in that case הֵעִיד would necessarily be construed with בְּ, but they refer to the fact that the marriage took place before the face of God, or with looking up to God; and the objection that nothing is known of any religious benediction at the marriage, or any mutual vow of fidelity, is merely an *argumentum a silentio*, which proves nothing. If the marriage was a *b*ᵉ*rīth 'Elōhīm* (a covenant of God), as described in Prov. ii. 17, it was also concluded before the face of God, and God was a witness to the marriage. With the expression "wife of thy youth" the prophet appeals to the heart of the husband, pointing to the love of his youth with which the marriage had been entered into; and so also in the circumstantial clause, through which he brings to the light the faithless treatment of the wife in putting her away: "Yet she was thy companion, who shared thy joy and sorrow, and the wife of thy covenant, with whom thou didst make a covenant for life." In ver. 15*a* the prophet shows still further the reprehensible character of the divorce, by rebutting the appeal to Abraham's conduct towards Hagar as inapplicable. The true interpretation of this hemistich, which has been explained in very different, and to some extent in very marvellous ways, is obvious enough if we only bear in mind that the subordinate clause וּשְׁאָר רוּחַ לוֹ, from its very position and from the words themselves, can only contain a more precise definition of the subject of the principal clause. The affirmation "a remnant of spirit is (was) to him" does not apply to God, but only to man, as L. de Dieu has correctly observed. *Rūăch* denotes here, as in Num. xxvii. 18, Josh. v. 1, 1 Kings x. 5, not so much intelligence and consideration, as the higher power breathed into man by God, which determines that moral and religious life to which we are accustomed to give the name of virtue. By *'echâd* (one), therefore, we cannot understand God, but only a man; and לֹא אֶחָד (not any one = no one, not one man) is the subject of the sen-

tence, whilst the object to עָשָׂה must be supplied from the previous sentence: "No man, who has even a remnant of reason, or of sense for right and wrong, has done," *sc.* what ye are doing, namely, faithlessly put away the wife of his youth. To this there is appended the objection: "And what did the one do?" which the prophet adduces as a possible exception that may be taken to his statement, for the purpose of refuting it. The words וּמָה הָאֶחָד are elliptical, the verb עָשָׂה, which may easily be supplied from the previous clause, being omitted (cf. Eccl. ii. 12). הָאֶחָד, not *unus aliquis*, but the well-known one, whom it was most natural to think of when the question in hand was that of putting away a wife, viz. Abraham, who put away Hagar, by whom he had begotten Ishmael, and who was therefore also his wife (Gen. xxi.). The prophet therefore replies, that Abraham sought to obtain the seed promised him by God, *i.e.* he dismissed Hagar, because God promised to give him the desired posterity, not in Ishmael through the maid Hagar, but through Sarah in Isaac, so that in doing this he was simply acting in obedience to the word of God (Gen. xxi. 12). After meeting this possible objection, Malachi warns his contemporaries to beware of faithlessly putting away their wives. The *Vav* before *nishmartem* is the *Vav rel.*, through which the perfect acquires the force of a cohortative as a deduction from the facts before them, as in ועשית in 1 Kings ii. 6 (see Ewald, § 342, *c*). נִשְׁמַר בְּרוּחוֹ is synonymous with נִשְׁמַר בְּנַפְשׁוֹ in Jer. xvii. 21, and this is equivalent to נִשְׁמַר לְנַפְשׁוֹ in Deut. iv. 15 and Josh. xxiii. 11. The instrumental view of בְּ ("by means of the Spirit:" Koehler) is thus proved to be inadmissible. "Take heed to your spirit," *i.e.* beware of losing your spirit. We need not take *rūăch* in a different sense here from that in which it is used in the clause immediately preceding; for with the loss of the spiritual and moral *vis vitæ*, which has been received from God, the life itself perishes. What it is that they are to beware of is stated in the last clause, which is attached by the simple copula (*Vav*), and in which the address passes from the second person into the third, to express what is affirmed as applying to every man. This interchange of *thou* (in wife of thy youth) and *he* (in יִבְגֹּד) in the same clause appears very strange to our mode of thought and speech; but it is not without analogy in Hebrew (*e.g.* in

Isa. i. 29; cf. Ewald, § 319, *a*), so that we have no right to alter יִבְגֹּד into תִּבְגֹּד, since the ancient versions and the readings of certain codices do not furnish sufficient critical authority for such a change. The subject in יִבְגֹּד is naturally thought of as indefinite: any one, men. This warning is accounted for in ver. 16, first of all in the statement that God hates putting away. שַׁלַּח is the inf. constr. *piel* and the object to שָׂנֵא: "the sending away (of a wife), divorce." שָׂנֵא is a participle, the pronominal subject being omitted, as in *maggīd* in Zech. ix. 12, because it may easily be inferred from the following words: אָמַר יי׳ (saith the Lord of hosts). The thought is not at variance with Deut. xxiv. 1 sqq., where the putting away of a wife is allowed; for this was allowed because of the hardness of their hearts, whereas God desires that a marriage should be kept sacred (cf. Matt. xix. 3 sqq. and the comm. on Deut. xxiv. 1–5). A second reason for condemning the divorce is given in the words וְכִסָּה חָמָס עַל לׄ, which do not depend upon כִּי שָׂנֵא, but form a sentence co-ordinate to this. We may either render these words, "he (who puts away his wife) covers his garment with sin," or "sin covers his garment." The meaning is the same in either case, namely, that wickedness will adhere irremoveably to such a man. The figurative expression may be explained from the idea that the dress reflects the inward part of a man, and therefore a soiled garment is a symbol of uncleanness of heart (cf. Zech. iii. 4; Isa. lxiv. 5; Rev. iii. 4, vii. 14). With a repetition of the warning to beware of this faithlessness, the subject is brought to a close.

THE DAY OF THE LORD.—Chap. ii. 17–iv. 6.

In this section the prophet's words are directed against the spirit of discontent and murmuring which prevailed among the people, who lost faith in all the promises of God, because the expected manifestation of the glory of the Lord for the good of His people did not take place at once, and in their despair called even the holiness and justice of God in question, and began to deny the coming of the Lord to judge the world. The prophet lets the feelings of the people express themselves

in ch. ii. 17, for the purpose of meeting them with an announcement of the day of the Lord and its true nature, in ch. iii. and iv. Before His coming the Lord will send a messenger, to prepare the way for Him. He Himself will then suddenly come, and that to refine His people by the fire of judgment and to exterminate the sinners (ch. iii. 1–6). The people are retarding the revelation of the promised salvation through their unfaithfulness to God (vers. 7–12), and preparing destruction for themselves by their impatient murmuring; for in the day of judgment none but the righteous find mercy: the judgment will make manifest the distinction between the righteous and the wicked (vers. 13–18), and bring destruction to the wicked, and salvation to the godly (ch. iv. 1–3). The prophecy then closes with the admonition to lay to heart the law of Moses, and with an announcement that the Lord will send the prophet Elijah before the day of His coming, to call the degenerate nation to repentance, in order that when He appears the land may not be smitten with the curse (vers. 4–6).

Ch. ii. 17. "*Ye weary Jehovah with your words, and say, Wherewith do we weary? In that ye say, Every evil-doer is good in the eyes of Jehovah, and He takes pleasure in them, or where is the God of judgment?*" The persons who are introduced as speaking here are neither the pious Israelites, who were not only pressed down by the weight of their heavy afflictions, but indignant at the prosperity of their godless countrymen, and were thus impelled to give utterance to despairing complaints, and doubts as to the justice of God (Theodoret); nor a middle class between the truly pious and perfectly godless, consisting of those who were led by a certain instinctive need to adopt the faith inherited from the fathers, and sought to fulfil the commandments of the moral law of God, but the foundations of whose faith and piety were not deep enough for them humbly to submit themselves to the marvellous ways of God, so that whenever the dealings of God did not correspond to their expectations, they lost their faith in Him and turned their backs upon Him (Koehler). The whole of the contents of this section are opposed to the first assumption. Those who murmured against God were, according to ch. iii. 7 sqq., such as had departed like the fathers from the law of God and defrauded God in the tithes and heave-offerings, and with

whom those who feared God are contrasted in vers. 16 sqq. Moreover, the reproach brought against them in ch. ii. 17, "Ye weary Jehovah with your words," and in ch. iii. 13, "Your words put constraint upon me," show that they do not belong to the righteous, who, while bending under the burden of temptation, appear to have raised similar complaints; as we read for example in Ps. xxxvii., xlix., and lxxiii. The second view is precluded by the absence, not only of every trace of the nation being divided into three classes, but also of every indication that those who murmured thus had endeavoured to fulfil the commandments of the moral law of God. The answer of the Lord to this murmuring is addressed to the whole nation as one which had departed from His commandments, and defrauded God with the tithes and sacrifices (ch. iii. 7, 8). The judgment which they wanted to see would fall, according to ch. iii. 5, upon the sorcerers, adulterers, and other gross sinners; and in ch. iii. 16–18 the only persons distinguished from these are the truly righteous who remember the name of the Lord. It clearly follows from this, that the feelings expressed in ch. ii. 17 and iii. 13 were not cherished by the whole nation without exception, but only by the great mass of the people, in contrast with whom the small handful of godly men formed a vanishing minority, which is passed over in the attack made upon the spirit prevailing in the nation. This disposition vents itself in the words: Every one who does evil is good in the eyes of God, and Jehovah takes pleasure in the wicked. By עֹשֵׂה רָע the murmurers mean, not notorious sinners in their midst, but the heathen who enjoyed undisturbed prosperity. To give a reason for this fancy, they inquire, Where is the God of judgment? אַו, "or," *i.e.* if this be not the case, as in Job xvi. 3, xxii. 11, why does not God punish the ungodly heathen? why does He not interpose as judge, if He has no pleasure in the wicked? Such speeches as these the prophet calls הוֹגֵעַ, a wearying of God (cf. Isa. xliii. 23, 24).

Ch. iii. 1–6. Coming of the Lord to judgment. Ver. 1. "*Behold, I send my messenger, that he may prepare the way before me; and the Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come to His temple, and the angel of the covenant, whom ye desire; behold he comes, saith Jehovah of hosts.*" To the question, Where is or remains the God of judgment? the Lord Himself replies

that He will suddenly come to His temple, but that before His coming He will send a messenger to prepare the way for Him. The announcement of this messenger rests upon the prophecy in Isa. xl. 3 sqq., as the expression וּפִנָּה דֶרֶךְ, which is borrowed from that passage, clearly shows. The person whose voice Isaiah heard calling to make the way of Jehovah in the desert, that the glory of the Lord might be revealed to all flesh, is here described as מַלְאָכִי, whom Jehovah will send before Him, *i.e.* before His coming. This *mal'âkh* is not a heavenly messenger, or spiritual being (Rashi, Kimchi), nor the angel of Jehovah *κατ' ἐξοχήν*, who is mentioned afterwards and called *mal'akh habb'rīth*, but an earthly messenger of the Lord, and indeed the same who is called the prophet Elijah in ver. 23, and therefore not "an ideal person, viz. the whole choir of divine messengers, who are to prepare the way for the coming of salvation, and open the door for the future grace" (Hengst.), but a concrete personality—a messenger who was really sent to the nation in John the Baptist immediately before the coming of the Lord. The ideal view is precluded not only by the historical fact, that not a single prophet arose in Israel during the whole period between Malachi and John, but also by the context of the passage before us, according to which the sending of the messenger was to take place immediately before the coming of the Lord to His temple. It is true that in ch. ii. 7 the priest is also called a messenger of Jehovah; but the expression הִנְנִי שֹׁלֵחַ (behold I send) prevents our understanding the term *mal'âkh* as referring to the priests, or even as including them, inasmuch as "sending" would not apply to the priests as the standing mediators between the Lord and His people. Moreover, it was because the priests did not fulfil their duty as the ordinary ambassadors of God that the Lord was about to send an extraordinary messenger. Preparing the way (פִּנָּה דֶרֶךְ, an expression peculiar to Isaiah: compare Isa. xl. 3; also, Isa. lvii. 14 and lxii. 10), by clearing away the impediments lying in the road, denotes the removal of all that retards the coming of the Lord to His people, *i.e.* the taking away of enmity to God and of ungodliness by the preaching of repentance and the conversion of sinners. The announcement of this messenger therefore implied, that the nation in its existing moral condition was not yet prepared for the reception of the Lord, and therefore had

no ground for murmuring at the delay of the manifestation of the divine glory, but ought rather to murmur at its own sin and estrangement from God. When the way shall have been prepared, the Lord will suddenly come. פִּתְאֹם, not *statim*, immediately (Jerome), but unexpectedly. "This suddenness is repeated in all the acts and judgments of the Lord. The Lord of glory always comes as a thief in the night to those who sleep in their sins" (Schmieder). "The Lord" (*hâ'âdōn*) is God; this is evident both from the fact that He comes to *His* temple, *i.e.* the temple of Jehovah, and also from the relative clause "whom ye seek," which points back to the question, "Where is the God of judgment?" (ch. ii. 17.) The Lord comes to His temple (*hēkhâl, lit.* palace) as the God-king of Israel, to dwell therein for ever (cf. Ezek. xliii. 7, xxxvii. 26, 27). And He comes as the angel of the covenant, for whom the people are longing. The identity of the angel of the covenant with the "Lord" (*hâ'âdōn*) is placed beyond the reach of doubt by the parallelism of the clauses, and the notion is thereby refuted that the "covenant angel" is identical with the person previously mentioned as מַלְאָכִי (Hitzig, Maurer, etc.). This identity does not indeed exclude a distinction of person; but it does exclude a difference between the two, or the opinion that the angel of the covenant is that mediator whom Isaiah had promised (Isa. xlii. 6) as the antitype of Moses, and the mediator of a new, perfect, and eternally-enduring covenant relation between God and Israel (Hofmann, *Schriftbeweis*, i. p. 183). For it was not for a second Moses that the people were longing, or for a mediator of the new covenant, but for the coming of God to judgment. The coming of the Lord to His temple is represented as a coming of the covenant angel, with reference to the fact that Jehovah had in the olden time revealed His glory in His *Mal'akh* in a manner perceptible to the senses, and that in this mode of revelation He had not only redeemed Israel out of the hand of Egypt (Ex. iii. 6 sqq.), gone before the army of Israel (Ex. xiv. 19), and led Israel through the desert to Canaan (Ex. xxiii. 20 sqq., xxxiii. 14 sqq.), but had also filled the temple with His glory. The covenant, in relation to which the *Mal'akh*, who is of one essence with Jehovah, is here called the angel of the covenant, is not the new covenant promised

in Jer. xxxi. 31 sqq., but the covenant of Jehovah with Israel, according to which Jehovah dwells in the midst of Israel, and manifests His gracious presence by blessing the righteous and punishing the ungodly (cf. Ex. xxv. 8; Lev. xxvi. 11, 12; Deut. iv. 24; Isa. xxxiii. 14): (Koehler). The words "Behold he (the covenant angel) cometh" serve to confirm the assurance, and are still further strengthened by אָמַר יי צ׳ (saith Jehovah of hosts). This promise was fulfilled in the coming of Christ, in whom the angel of the covenant, the Logos, became flesh, and in the sending of John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Him. (See also at ver. 24.)

With the coming of the Lord the judgment will also begin; not the judgment upon the heathen, however, for which the ungodly nation was longing, but the judgment upon the godless members of the covenant nation. Ver. 2. "*And who endures the day of His coming? and who can stand at His appearing? for He is like the smelter's fire, and like washers' lye:* Ver. 3. *And will sit smelting and purifying silver, and will purify the children of Levi, and refine like gold and silver, that they may be offering to Jehovah His sacrifice in righteousness.* Ver. 4. *And the sacrifice of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasant, as in the days of the olden time, and as in the years of the past.*" The question "who endures the day" has a negative meaning, like מִי in Isa. liii. 1: no one endures it (for the fact itself compare Joel ii. 11). The prophet is speaking to the ungodly. The second clause is synonymous. עָמַד, to remain standing, in contrast with falling, or sinking under the burden of the judgment. The reason for this is given in the second hemistich. The Lord when He comes will be like a smelter's fire, which burns out all the corrupt ingredients that are mixed with the gold and silver (cf. Zech. xiii. 9), and like the lye or alkaline salt by which clothes are cleansed from dirt (cf. Isa. iv. 4). The double figure has but one meaning; hence only the first figure is carried out in ver. 3, a somewhat different turn being given to it, since the Lord is no longer compared to the fire, but represented as a smelter. As a smelter purifies gold and silver from the dross adhering to it, so will the Lord refine the sons of Levi, by whom the priests are principally intended. The *yâshabh* (sit) serves as a pictorial description, like *'âmad* (stand) in Mic.

v. 3. The participles *m'tsârēph* and *m'tahēr* describe the capacity in which He sits, viz. as a smelter and purifier of silver. צָרַף: to strain, or filter; a term transferred to metals, because in smelting the pure metal is allowed to flow off, so that the earthy ingredients are left in the crucible (Ps. xii. 7; Job xxviii. 1, etc.). The fact that the sons of Levi are named, as the object of the refining action of the Lord, is to be explained from what is mentioned in ch. i. 6 sqq. concerning their degeneracy. Since they, the supporters and promoters of the religious life of the nation, were quite corrupt, the renovation of the national life must begin with their purification. This purification, however, does not consist merely in the fact, that the individuals who are displeasing to God will be cut off from among them (Koehler), nor merely in their being cleansed from the sins and crimes adhering to them (Hitzig), but in both, so that those who are corrigible are improved, and the incorrigible cut off. This is implied in the idea of purification, and is confirmed by the result of the refining work of the Lord, as given in the last clause of the verse. They are to become to the Lord offerers of sacrifices in righteousness. *Bits'dâqâh* does not refer to the nature of the sacrifices, viz. righteous sacrifices, *i.e.* such as correspond to the law, but to the moral character of the offerers, viz. that they will attend to the offering of sacrifice in a proper state of heart, as in Ps. iv. 6. הָיוּ מְנִיחֵי is a *constructio periphr.* to denote the permanence of the action (cf. Ewald, § 168, *c*). The *tsaqeph-qaton* does not compel us to separate הָיוּ לַיהוָה (compare, on the contrary, Gen. i. 6*b* for example). Then, namely when the priests offer sacrifices in righteousness again, will the sacrificing of the whole nation be pleasant to the Lord, as was the case in the olden time. The days of the olden time and years of the past are the times of Moses, or the first years of the sojourn in the desert (Jer. ii. 2), possibly also the times of David and of the first years of the reign of Solomon; whereas now, *i.e.* in the time of Malachi, the sacrifices of the nation were displeasing to God, not merely on account of the sins of the people (ch. ii. 13), but chiefly on account of the badness of the sacrificing priests (i. 10, 13). Moreover, we must not infer from vers. 3 and 4, that Malachi imagined that the Old Testament worship would be continued during the Messianic times; but

his words are to be explained from the custom of the prophets, of using the forms of the Old Testament worship to depict the reverence for God which would characterize the new covenant.

Ver. 5. "*And I will draw near to you to judgment, and will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against those who swear for deceit, and those who press down the wages of the hireling, the widow and the orphan, and bow down the foreigner, and fear not me, saith Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 6. *For I Jehovah, I change not; and ye sons of Israel, ye are not consumed.*" The refining which the Lord will perform, at His coming will not limit itself to the priests, but become a judgment upon all sinners. This judgment is threatened against those who wanted the judgment of God to come, according to ch. ii. 17. To these the Lord will draw near to judgment, and rise up as a swift witness against all the wicked who do not fear Him. The word קָרַבְתִּי does not imply that the judgment announced will actually commence at once. The drawing near to judgment takes place in the day of His coming (ver. 2), and this is preceded by the sending of the messenger to prepare the way. The words affirm nothing as to the time of the coming, because this was not revealed to the prophet. Nor is there any intimation on this point in the word מְמַהֵר, but simply the announcement that the Lord will come with unexpected rapidity, in contrast with the murmuring of the people at the delay of judgment (ch. ii. 17). מְמַהֵר answers substantially to פִּתְאֹם in ver. 1. God comes as a practical witness against the wicked, convicting them of their guilt by punishing them. The particular sins mentioned here are such as were grievous sins in the eye of the law, and to some extent were punishable with death. On sorcerers and adulterers see Ex. xxii. 17, Lev. xx. 10, Deut. xxii. 22. That sorcery was very common among the Jews after the captivity, is evident from such passages as Acts viii. 9, xiii. 6, and from Josephus, *Ant.* xx. 6, *de bell. Jud.* ii. 12, 23; and the occurrence of adultery may be inferred from the condemnation of the marriages with heathen wives in ch. ii. 10–16. On false swearing compare Lev. xix. 12. The expression to press the wages of the labourer is unusual, since the only other passage in which עָשַׁק is construed with a neuter object is Mic. ii. 2, and in every other case it is applied to persons; for עָשַׁק אֶבְיוֹן com-

pare Lev. xix. 13 and Deut. xxiv. 14, 15, to which the reproof refers. אַלְמָנָה וְיָתוֹם are not genitives dependent upon עֹבֵר, but further objects to עֹשְׁקֵי. For the fact itself compare Ex. xxii. 21–23, Deut. xxiv. 17, xxvii. 19. To גֵּר מַטֵּי we are not to supply מִמִּשְׁפָּט, after Deut. xxiv. 17 and xxvii. 19; but הַטֵּה is used of the person as in Amos v. 12: to bow down the stranger, *i.e.* to oppress him unjustly. The words, "and fear not me," point to the source from which all these sins flowed, and refer to all the sinners mentioned before. This threat of judgment is explained in ver. 6 in the double clause: that Jehovah does not change, and the sons of Israel do not perish. Because Jehovah is unchangeable in His purposes, and Israel as the people of God is not to perish, therefore will God exterminate the wicked out of Israel by means of judgment, in order to refine it and shape it according to its true calling. The perfects are used to express established truths. The unchangeableness of God is implied in the name *Jehovah*, "who is that He is," the absolutely independent and absolutely existing One (see at Gen. ii. 4). For the fact itself compare Num. xxiii. 19, 1 Sam. xv. 29, Jas. i. 17. *Jehovah* is in apposition to *'ănī* (I), and not a predicate in the sense of "I am Jehovah" (Luther, Hengstenberg, etc.); this is evident from the parallel וְאַתֶּם בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב (and ye, the sons of Jacob), where no one thinks of taking בני יעק (sons of Jacob) as a predicate. *Kâlâh*, to come to an end, to be destroyed, as the parallel passage, Jer. xxx. 11, which floated before the prophet's mind, clearly shows. The name "sons of Jacob" (poetical for sons of Israel) is used emphatically, denoting the true members of the people of God, who rightly bear the name of *Israel*. These do not perish, because their existence rests upon the promise of the unchangeable God (cf. Rom. xi. 28, 29).

After the Lord has announced to the murmuring people that He will suddenly draw near to judgment upon the wicked, He proceeds to explain the reason why He has hitherto withheld His blessing and His salvation. Ver. 7. "*From the days of your fathers ye have departed from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you, saith Jehovah of hosts; and ye say, Wherein shall we return?* Ver. 8. *Dare a man indeed defraud God, that ye have defrauded me? and ye say, In what have we defrauded Thee? In the tithes and*

the heave-offering. Ver. 9. *Ye are cursed with the curse, and yet ye defraud me, even the whole nation.*" The reason why Israel waits in vain for the judgment and the salvation dawning with it, is not to be found in God, but in the people, in the fact, that from time immemorial they have transgressed the commandments of God (see Isa. xliii. 27; Ezek. ii. 3; Hos. x. 9). And yet they regard themselves as righteous. They reply to the call to repentance by saying, בַּמֶּה נָשׁוּב, wherein, *i.e.* in what particular, shall we turn? The prophet thereupon shows them their sin: they do what no man should presume to attempt —they try to defraud God in the tithe and heave-offering, namely, by either not paying them at all, or not paying them as they should into the house of God. קָבַע, which only occurs here and at Prov. xxii. 23, signifies to defraud, to overreach. הַמַּעֲשֵׂר והתר is either an accusative of free subordination, or else we must supply the preposition ב from the question itself. On the tithe see Lev. xxvii. 30 sqq., Num. xviii. 20 sqq., and Deut. xiv. 22 sqq. (see also my *Bibl. Ant.* i. p. 337 sqq.); and on the heave-offering (*t'rūmâh*), the portion of his income lifted off from the rest, for the purposes of divine worship, see my *Bibl. Ant.* i. p. 245. And this they do, notwithstanding the fact that God has already visited them with severe punishment, viz. with the curse of barrenness and of the failure of the harvest. We may see from vers. 10–12, that the curse with which they were smitten consisted in this. וְאֹתִי is adversative: yet ye defraud me, and indeed the whole nation, and not merely certain individuals.

Ver. 10. "*Bring ye all the tithe into the treasure-house, that there may be consumption in my house, and prove me now herewith, saith Jehovah of hosts, if I do not open you the sluices of heaven, and pour you out a blessing to superabundance.* Ver. 11. *And I will rebuke the devourer for you, that he may not destroy the fruit of your ground; and your vine will not miscarry in the field, saith Jehovah of hosts.* Ver. 12. *And all nations will call you blessed; for ye will be a land of good pleasure, saith Jehovah of hosts.*" In ver. 10*a* the emphasis lies upon *kol*: the *whole* of the tithe they are to bring, and not merely a portion of it, and so defraud the Lord; for the tithe was paid to Jehovah for His servants the Levites (Num. xviii. 24). It was delivered, at least after the times of the later kings, at the

sanctuary, where store-chambers were built for the purpose (cf. 2 Chron. xxxi. 11 sqq; Neh. x. 38, 39, xii. 44, xiii. 12). *Tereph* signifies here food, or consumption, as in Prov. xxxi. 15, Ps. cxi. 5. בָּזֹאת, through this, *i.e.* through their giving to God what they are under obligation to give Him, they are to prove God, whether in His attitude towards them He is no longer the holy and righteous God (ii. 17, iii. 6). Then will they also learn, that He causes the promised blessing to flow in the richest abundance to those who keep His commandments. אִם לֹא is not a particle of asseveration or oath (Koehler), but an indirect question: whether not. Opening the sluices of heaven is a figure, denoting the most copious supply of blessing, so that it flows down from heaven like a pouring rain (as in 2 Kings vii. 2). עַד בְּלִי דָי, till there is no more need, *i.e.* in superabundance. This thought is individualized in ver. 11. Everything that could injure the fruits of the land God will take away. גָּעַר, to rebuke practically, *i.e.* to avert the intention. אֹכֵל, the devourer, is here the locust, so called from its insatiable voracity. *Shikkēl*, to miscarry, is affirmed of the vine, when it has set a good quantity of grapes, which perish and drop off before they ripen. In consequence of this blessing, all nations will call Israel blessed (ver. 12), because its land will be an object of pleasure to every one (cf. Zech. vii. 14, viii. 13, 23).

Vers. 13–18. The impatient murmuring of the nation.—Ver. 13. "*Your words do violence to me, saith Jehovah; and ye say, What do we converse against Thee?* Ver. 14. *Ye say, It is vain to serve God; and what gain is it, that we have kept His guard, and have gone about in deep mourning before Jehovah of hosts?* Ver. 15. *And now we call the proud blessed: not only have the doers of wickedness been built up, but they have also tempted God and have been saved.*" After the Lord has disclosed to the people the cause of His withholding His blessing, He shows them still further, that their murmuring against Him is unjust, and that the coming day of judgment will bring to light the distinction between the wicked and those who fear God. חָזַק with עַל, to be strong over any one, does not mean to be harsh or burdensome, but to do violence to a person, to overpower him (cf. Ex. xii. 33; 2 Sam. xxiv. 4, etc.). The niphal *nidbar* has a reciprocal meaning, to converse with one another (cf. Ezek. xxxiii. 30). The conversations which they

carry on with one another take this direction, that it is useless to serve God, because the righteous have no advantage over sinners. For שָׁמַר מִשְׁמַרְתּוֹ see the comm. on Gen. xxvi. 5. *Hâlakh q'dōrannīth*, to go about dirty or black, either with their faces and clothes unwashed, or wrapped in black mourning costume (*saq*), is a sign of mourning, here of fasting, as mourning for sin (cf. Ps. xxxv. 13, 14, xxxviii. 7; Job xxx. 28; 1 Macc. iii. 48). מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה, from awe of Jehovah. The fasting, and that in its external form, they bring into prominence as a special sign of their piety, as an act of penitence, through which they make reparation for certain sins against God, by which we are not to understand the fasting prescribed for the day of atonement, but voluntary fasting, which was regarded as a special sign of piety. What is reprehensible in the state of mind expressing itself in these words, is not so much the complaint that their piety brings them no gain (for such complaints were uttered even by believing souls in their hours of temptation; cf. Ps. lxxiii. 13), as the delusion that their merely outward worship, which was bad enough according to what has already been affirmed, is the genuine worship which God must acknowledge and reward. This disposition to attribute worth to the *opus operatum* of fasting is attacked even by Isaiah, in Isa. lviii.; but after the captivity it continued to increase, until it reached its culminating point in Pharisaism. How thoroughly different the persons speaking here are from the believing souls under temptation, who also appeal to their righteousness when calling upon God in their trouble, is especially clear from their further words in ver. 15. Because God does not reward their fasting with blessing and prosperity, they begin to call the proud sinners, who have happiness and success, blessed. וְעַתָּה is the particle of inference. The participle מְאַשְּׁרִים has the force of a *futurum instans* (cf. Ewald, § 306, *d*), denoting what men prepare to do. *Zēdīm*, the haughty or proud, are the heathen, as in Isa. xiii. 11, who are called עֹשֵׂי רִשְׁעָה in the following clause. The next two clauses are placed in a reciprocal relation to one another by *gam . . . gam* (cf. Ewald, § 359). The wicked are both built up, *i.e.* flourish (cf. Jer. xii. 16, 17; Ex. i. 21), and also, notwithstanding the fact that they have tempted God, are delivered when they fall into misfortune. *Bâchan Elohim*, to prove or

test God, *i.e.* to call out His judgment through their wickedness.

With these foolish speeches the prophet proceeds in vers. 16 sqq. to contrast the conduct of those who fear God, pointing to the blessing which they derive from their piety. Ver. 16. "*Then those who feared Jehovah conversed with one another, and Jehovah attended and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for those who fear Jehovah and reverence His name.* Ver. 17. *And they will be to me as a possession, saith Jehovah of hosts, for the day that I create, and I will spare them as a man spareth his son that serveth him.* Ver. 18. *And ye will again perceive the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.*" אָז, *then,* indicates that the conversation of those who feared God had been occasioned by the words of the ungodly. The substance of this conversation is not described more minutely, but may be gathered from the context, namely, from the statement as to the attitude in which Jehovah stood towards them. We may see from this, that they strengthened themselves in their faith in Jehovah, as the holy God and just Judge who would in due time repay both the wicked and the righteous according to their deeds, and thus presented a great contrast to the great mass with their blasphemous sayings. This description of the conduct of the godly is an indirect admonition to the people, as to what their attitude towards God ought to be. What was done by those who feared Jehovah ought to be taken as a model by the whole nation which called Jehovah its God. Jehovah not only took notice of these conversations, but had them written in a book of remembrance, to reward them for them in due time. Writing in a book of remembrance recals to mind the custom of the Persians, of having the names of those who deserved well of the king entered in a book with a notice of their merits, that they might be rewarded for them at some future time (Esth. vi. 1); but it rests upon the much older idea, that the names and actions of the righteous are written in a book before God (cf. Ps. lvi. 9, Dan. vii. 10). This book was written לִפְנֵי, before Jehovah, *i.e.* not in His presence, but in order that it might lie before Jehovah, and remind Him of the righteous and their deeds. לִירֵאָי is a *dat. com.*: "for those who fear God,"

i.e. for their good. חָשַׁב שֵׁם, to consider or value the name of the Lord (cf. Isa. xiii. 17, xxxiii. 8). This writing was done because the Lord would make them His own on the day of His coming, and show them mercy. *Layyōm:* for the day = on the day; the *lamed* denoting the time, as in Isa. x. 3, Gen. xxi. 2, etc. The day which Jehovah makes is the day of the judgment which attends His coming. *S'gullâh* is the object, not to *'ōśeh*, as we might suppose according to the accents, but to *hâyū:* they will be my possession on the day which I create. This is evident partly from a comparison of ver. 21, where the words יוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה recur, and partly from the original passage in Ex. xix. 5: ye will be to me *s'gullâh, i.e.* a valued possession (see the comm.). The righteous will then be a possession for Jehovah, because on that day the glory of the children of God will first be revealed, and the Israel of God will reach the mark of its heavenly calling (see Col. iii. 4). The Lord will spare them in the judgment as a father spares his son who serves him. The expression *to spare* may be explained from the contrast to the punishment of the ungodly. In ver. 18 the prophet bids the murmurers consider what has been said concerning the righteous, by telling them that they will then see the difference between the righteous who serve God, and the wicked who do not serve Him, that is to say, will learn that it is always profitable to serve God. שֻׁבְתֶּם before רְאִיתֶם is to be taken adverbially: ye will see again. The expression "again" presupposes that the difference between those who feared God and the ungodly was to be seen before, and that the Lord had already made it manifest by former judgments. This had been the case in Egypt, where the Lord had caused such a separation to be made (Ex. xi. 7). The words do not imply that the persons addressed had previously stood in a different relation to this question from that in which they were standing then (Koehler). רָאָה בֵּין does not mean to look in between (Hitzig), but בֵּין is used in the sense of a substantive, signifying that which is between the two, the difference between the two. That בֵּין was originally a noun is evident from the dual הַבֵּינַיִם in 1 Sam. xvii. 4, 23.

This admonition to the ungodly is explained in ch. iv. 1 sqq. by a picture of the separation which will be effected by the day of judgment. Ver. 1. "*For behold the day cometh*

burning like a furnace, and all the proud and every doer of wickedness become stubble, and the coming day will burn them, saith Jehovah of hosts, so that it will not leave them root or branch. Ver. 2. *But to you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise and healing in its wings, and ye will go out and skip like stalled calves,* Ver. 3. *And will tread down the ungodly, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I create, saith Jehovah of hosts.*" The day of judgment will be to the ungodly like a burning furnace. "A fire burns more fiercely in a furnace than in the open air" (Hengstenberg). The ungodly will then resemble the stubble which the fire consumes (cf. Isa. v. 24, Zeph. i. 18, Ob. 18, etc.). זֵדִים and עֹשֵׂה רִשְׁעָה point back to ver. 15. Those who are called blessed by the murmuring nation will be consumed by the fire, as stubble is burned up, and indeed *all* who do wickedness, and therefore the murmurers themselves. אֲשֶׁר before לֹא יַעֲזֹב is a conjunction, *quod;* and the subject is not Jehovah, but the coming day. The figure "root and branch" is borrowed from a tree—the tree is the ungodly mass of the people (cf. Amos ii. 9)—and denotes total destruction, so that nothing will be left of them. To the righteous, on the other hand, the sun of righteousness will arise. *Tsedâqâh* is an epexegetical genitive of apposition. By the sun of righteousness the fathers, from Justin downwards, and nearly all the earlier commentators understand *Christ,* who is supposed to be described as the rising sun, like Jehovah in Ps. lxxxiv. 12 and Isa. lx. 19; and this view is founded upon a truth, viz. that the coming of Christ brings justice and salvation. But in the verse before us the context does not sustain the personal view, but simply the idea that righteousness itself is regarded as a sun. *Tsedâqâh,* again, is not justification or the forgiveness of sins, as Luther and others suppose, for there will be no forgiving of sins on the day of judgment, but God will then give to every man reward or punishment according to his works. *Tsedâqâh* is here, what it frequently is in Isaiah (*e.g.* Isa. xlv. 8, xlvi. 13, li. 5, etc.), righteousness in its consequences and effects, the sum and substance of salvation. Malachi uses *tsedâqâh,* righteousness, instead of יְשׁוּעָה, salvation, with an allusion to the fact, that the ungodly complained of the absence of the judgment and righteousness of God, that is to say, the righteousness which not

only punishes the ungodly, but also rewards the good with happiness and salvation. The sun of righteousness has מַרְפֵּא, healing, in its wings. The wings of the sun are the rays by which it is surrounded, and not a figure denoting swiftness. As the rays of the sun spread light and warmth over the earth for the growth and maturity of the plants and living creatures, so will the sun of righteousness bring the healing of all hurts and wounds which the power of darkness has inflicted upon the righteous. Then will they go forth, *sc.* from the holes and caves, into which they had withdrawn during the night of suffering and where they had kept themselves concealed, and skip like stalled calves (cf. 1 Sam. xxviii. 24), which are driven from the stall to the pasture. On *pūsh*, see at Hab. i. 8. And not only will those who fear God be liberated from all oppression, but they will also acquire power over the ungodly. They will tread down the wicked, who will then have become ashes, and lie like ashes upon the ground, having been completely destroyed by the fire of the judgment (cf. Isa. xxvi. 5, 6).

Vers. 4–6.—Concluding Admonition.—Ver. 4. "*Remember ye the law of Moses, my servant, which I commanded him upon Horeb for all Israel, statutes and rights.*[1] Ver. 5. *Behold, I send you Elijah the prophet before the day of Jehovah comes, the great and terrible one.* Ver. 6. *And he will turn the heart of the fathers to the sons, and the heart of the sons to their fathers,*

[1] The LXX. have put ver. 4 at the end of the book, not to call attention to its great importance, but probably for the very same reason for which the *Masora* observes, at the close of our book, that in the יֹתֹקֹק, *i.e.* in the books of Isaiah, the twelve prophets, the Lamentations, and Ecclesiastes, the last verse but one of these books was to be repeated when they were read in the synagogue, namely, because the last verse had too harsh a sound. The transposition is unsuitable, inasmuch as the promise in vers. 5 and 6 does not fit on to the idea expressed in vers. 2 and 3, but only to that in ver. 4. According to the *Masora*, the ז in זִכְרוּ should be written as *litera majusc.*, although in many codd. it has the usual form; and this also is not to show the great importance of the verse, since these Masoretic indications have generally a different meaning, but in all probability it is simply to indicate that this is the only passage in the book of the twelve prophets in which the word is pronounced זִכְרוּ (cf. זִכְרוֹ in Hos. xii. 6, xiv. 8), whereas in the other books, with the exception of Job xviii. 17, this is the only pronunciation that is met with.

that I may not come and smite the land with the curse" (*mit dem Banne*, with the ban). The admonition, "Remember ye the law of Moses," forms the conclusion not only of the last section (ch. iii. 13–iv. 3), but of the whole of the Book of Malachi, and cannot be connected with ver. 3 in the sense of "Remember what Moses has written in the law concerning Christ, or concerning the judgment," as Theod. Mops. and others maintain; nor must it be restricted to the time previous to the coming of the Messiah by the interpolation of *interim* (v. Til and Mich.). It is rather a perfectly general admonition to lay to heart and observe the law. For this is referred to here, "not according to its casual and transient form, but according to its real essence as expressing the holiness of God, just as in Matt. v. 17" (Hengstenberg). Malachi thus closes by showing to the people what it is their duty to do, if on the day of judgment they would escape the curse with which transgressors are threatened in the law, and participate in the salvation so generally desired, and promised to those who fear God. By the expression "my servant," the law is traced back to God as its author. At the giving of the law, Moses was only the servant of Jehovah. אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי אֹתוֹ is not to be rendered "whom (אֲשֶׁר אוֹתוֹ) I charged with statutes and rights to all Israel" (Ewald, Bunsen), for we do not expect any further explanation of the relation in which Moses stood to the law, but "which I commanded him upon (to) all Israel." *Tsivvâh* is construed with a double accusative, and also with עַל governing the person to whom the command refers, as in Ezra viii. 17, 2 Sam. xiv. 8, Esther iv. 5. The words *chuqqīm ūmishpâtīm* are an epexegetical definition belonging to אֲשֶׁר; "which I commanded as statutes and rights," *i.e.* consisting of these; and they recal to mind Deut. iv. 1 and viii. 14, where Moses urges upon the people the observance of the law, and also mentions *Horeb* as the place where the law was given. The whole of the admonition forms an antithesis to the rebuke in ver. 7, that from the days of their fathers they went away from the ordinances of Jehovah. These they are to be mindful to observe, that the Lord when He comes may not smite the land with the ban. In order to avert this curse from Israel, the Lord would send the prophet Elijah before His coming, for the purpose of promoting a change of heart in the nation.

The identity of the prophet Elijah with the messenger mentioned in ver. 1, whom the Lord would send before Him, is universally acknowledged. But there is a difference of opinion as to the question, who is the Elijah mentioned here? The notion was a very ancient one, and one very widely spread among the rabbins and fathers, that the prophet Elijah, who was caught up to heaven, would reappear (compare the history of the exposition of our verse in Hengstenberg's *Christology*, vol. iv. p. 217 translation). The LXX. thought of him, and rendered אֵלִיָּה הַנָּבִיא by *Ἠλίαν τὸν Θεσβίτην*; so also did Sirach (xlviii. 10) and the Jews in the time of Christ (John i. 21; Matt. xvii. 10); and so have Hitzig, Maurer, and Ewald in the most recent times. But this view is proved to be erroneous by such passages as Hos. iii. 5, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 24, and Jer. xxx. 9, where the sending of David the king as the true shepherd of Israel is promised. Just as in these passages we cannot think of the return or resurrection of the David who had long been dead; but a king is meant who will reign over the nation of God in the mind and spirit of David; so the Elijah to be sent can only be a prophet with the spirit or power of Elijah the Tishbite. The second David was indeed to spring from the family of David, because to the seed of David there had been promised the eternal possession of the throne. The prophetic calling, on the other hand, was not hereditary in the prophet's house, but rested solely upon divine choice and endowment with the Spirit of God; and consequently by Elijah we are not to understand a lineal descendant of the Tishbite, but simply a prophet in whom the spirit and power of Elijah are revived, as Ephr. Syr., Luther, Calvin, and most of the Protestant commentators have maintained. But the reason why this prophet Elijah is named is to be sought for, not merely in the fact that Elijah was called to his work as a reformer in Israel at a period which was destitute of faith and of the true fear of Jehovah, and which immediately preceded a terrible judgment (Koehler), but also and more especially in the power and energy with which Elijah rose up to lead back the ungodly generation of his own time to the God of the fathers. The one does not exclude but rather includes the other. The greater the apostasy, the greater must be the power which is to stem it, so as to rescue those who suffer

themselves to be rescued, before the judgment bursts over such as are hardened. For ver. 5*b*, compare Joel iii. 4. This Elijah, according to ver. 6, is to lead back the heart of the fathers to the sons, and the heart of the sons to their fathers. The meaning of this is not that he will settle disputes in families, or restore peace between parents and children; for the leading sin of the nation at the time of our prophet was not family quarrels, but estrangement from God. The fathers are rather the ancestors of the Israelitish nation, the patriarchs, and generally the pious forefathers, such as David and the godly men of his time. The sons or children are the degenerate descendants of Malachi's own time and the succeeding ages. "The hearts of the godly fathers and the ungodly sons are estranged from one another. The bond of union, viz. common love to God, is wanting. The fathers are ashamed of their children, the children of their fathers" (Hengstenberg). This chasm between them Elijah is to fill up. Turning the heart of the fathers to the sons does not mean merely directing the love of the fathers to the sons once more, but also restoring the heart of the fathers in the sons, or giving to the sons the fathers' disposition and affections. Then will the heart of the sons also return to their fathers, turn itself towards them, so that they will be like-minded with the pious fathers. Elijah will thereby prepare the way of the Lord to His people, that at His coming He may not smite the land with the ban. The ban involves extermination. Whoever and whatever was laid under the ban was destroyed (cf. Lev. xxvii. 28, 29; Deut. xiii. 16, 17; and my *Bibl. Archäol.* i. § 70). This threat recals to mind the fate of the Canaanites who were smitten with the ban (Deut. xx. 17, 18). If Israel resembles the Canaanites in character, it will also necessarily share the fate of that people (cf. Deut. xii. 29).

The New Testament gives us a sufficient explanation of the historical allusion or fulfilment of our prophecy. The prophet Elijah, whom the Lord would send before His own coming, was sent in the person of John the Baptist. Even before his birth he was announced to his father by the angel Gabriel as the promised Elijah, by the declaration that he would turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, and go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts

of the fathers to the children, and the unbelieving to the wisdom of the just (Luke i. 16, 17). This address of the angel gives at the same time an authentic explanation of vers. 5 and 6 of our prophecy: the words "and the heart of the children to their fathers" being omitted, as implied in the turning of the heart of the fathers to the sons, and the explanatory words "and the unbelieving to the wisdom of the just" being introduced in their place; and the whole of the work of John, who was to go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, being described as "making ready a prepared people for the Lord." The appearance and ministry of John the Baptist answered to this announcement of the angel, and is so described in Matt. iii. 1–12, Mark i. 2–8, Luke iii. 2–18, that the allusion to our prophecy and the original passage (Isa. xl. 3) is obvious at once. Even by his outward appearance and his dress John announced himself as the promised prophet Elijah, who by the preaching of repentance and baptism was preparing the way for the Lord, who would come after him with the winnowing shovel to winnow His floor, and gather the wheat into His granary, but who would burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Christ Himself also not only assured the people (in Matt. xi. 10 sqq., Luke vii. 27 sqq.) that John was the messenger announced by Malachi and the Elijah who was to come, but also told His disciples (Matt. xvii. 11 sqq.; Mark ix. 11 sqq.) that Elijah, who was to come first and restore all things, had already come, though the people had not acknowledged him. And even John i. 21 is not at variance with these statements. When the messengers of the Sanhedrim came to John the Baptist to ask whether he was Elias, and he answered, "I am not," he simply gave a negative reply to their question, interpreted in the sense of a personal reappearance of Elijah the Tishbite, which was the sense in which they meant it, but he also declared himself to be the promised forerunner of the Lord by applying to his own labours the prophecy contained in Isa. xl. 3.

And as the prophet Elijah predicted by Malachi appeared in John the Baptist, so did the Lord come to His temple in the appearing of Jesus Christ. The opinion, which was very widely spread among the fathers and Catholic commentators, and which has also been adopted by many of the more modern

Protestant theologians (*e.g.* Menken and H. Olshausen), viz. that our prophecy was only provisionally fulfilled in the coming of John the Baptist and the incarnation of the Son of God in Jesus Christ, and that its true fulfilment will only take place at the second coming of Christ to judge the world, in the actual appearance of the risen Elijah by which it will be preceded, is not only at variance with the statements of the Lord concerning John the Baptist, which have been already quoted, but has no tenable foundation in our prophecy itself. The prophets of the Old Testament throughout make no allusion to any second coming of the Lord to His people. The day of the Lord, which they announce as the day of judgment, commenced with the appearance on earth of Christ, the incarnate Logos; and Christ Himself declared that He had come into the world for judgment (John ix. 39, cf. iii. 19 and xii. 40), viz. for the judgment of separating the believing from the ungodly, to give eternal life to those who believe on His name, and to bring death and condemnation to unbelievers. This judgment burst upon the Jewish nation not long after the ascension of Christ. Israel rejected its Saviour, and was smitten with the ban at the destruction of Jerusalem in the Roman war; and both people and land lie under this ban to the present day. And just as the judgment commenced at that time so far as Israel was concerned, so does it also begin in relation to all peoples and kingdoms of this earth with the first preaching of Christ among them, and will continue throughout all the centuries during which the kingdom spreads upon earth, until it shall be ultimately completed in the universal judgment at the visible second coming of the Lord at the last day.

With this calling to remembrance of the law of Moses, and this prediction that the prophet Elijah will be sent before the coming of the Lord Himself, the prophecy of the Old Testament is brought to a close. After Malachi, no other prophet arose in Israel until the time was fulfilled when the Elijah predicted by him appeared in John the Baptist, and immediately afterwards the Lord came to His temple, that is to say, the incarnate Son of God to His own possession, to make all who received Him children of God, the *s'gullâh* of the Lord. Law and prophets bore witness of Christ, and Christ came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfil them. Upon the

Mount of Christ's Transfiguration, therefore, there appeared both Moses, the founder of the law and mediator of the old covenant, and Elijah the prophet, as the restorer of the law in Israel, to talk with Jesus of His decease which He was to accomplish in Jerusalem (Matt. xvii. 1 sqq.; Mark ix. 1 sqq.; Luke ix. 28 sqq.), for a practical testimony to the apostles and to us all, that Jesus Christ, who laid down His life for us, to bear our sin and redeem us from the curse of the law, was the beloved Son of the Father, whom we are to hear, that by believing in His name we may become children of God and heirs of everlasting life.

END OF VOL. II.

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